

DOCUMENTS ON  
GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918-1945

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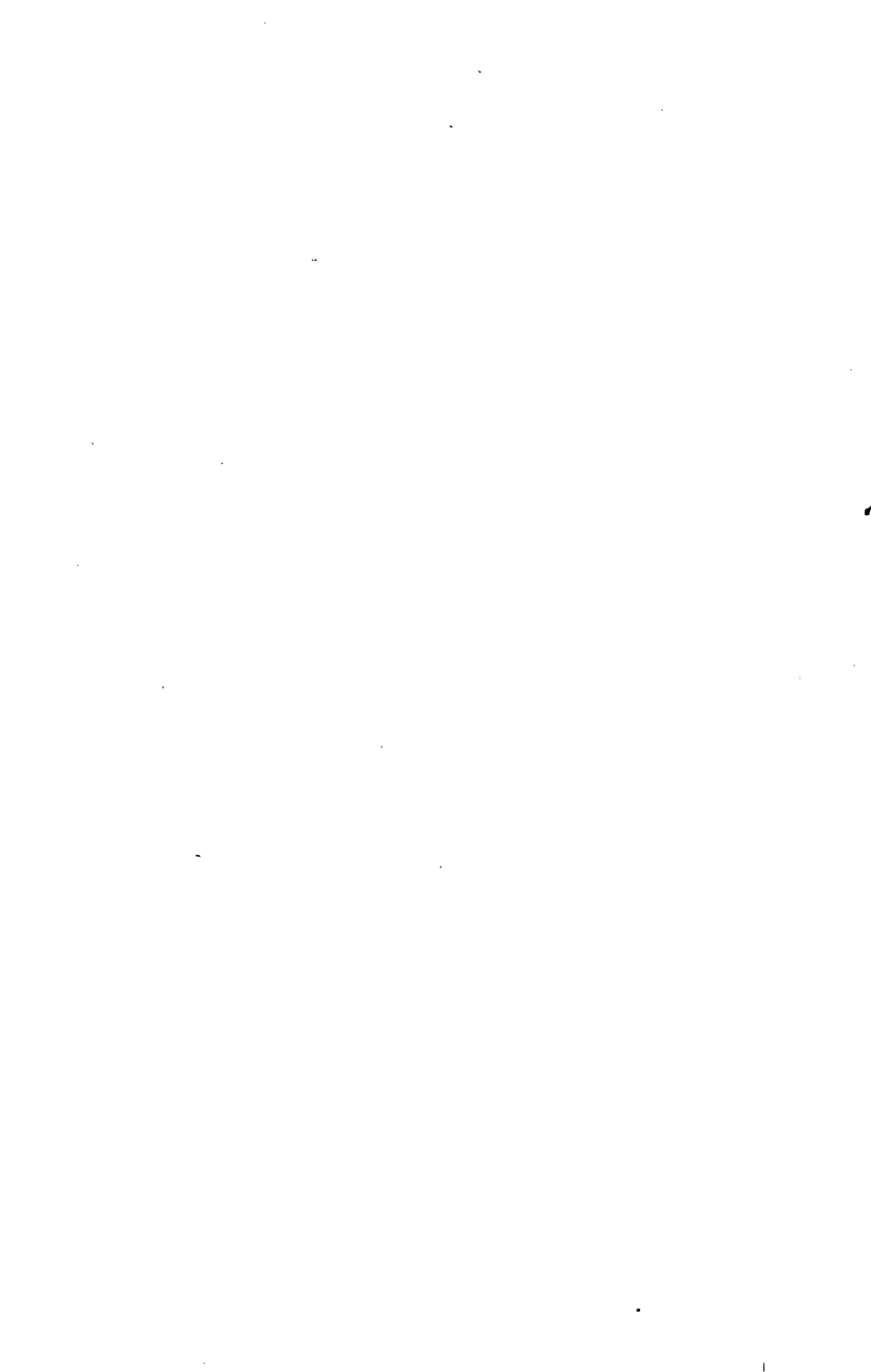
III



DOCUMENTS ON  
GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918-1945

SERIES D (1937-1945)

VOLUME VI  
THE LAST MONTHS OF PEACE  
MARCH-AUGUST 1939



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## PREFACE <sup>1</sup>

### I

In June 1946 the British Foreign Office and United States Department of State agreed to publish jointly documents from captured archives of the German Foreign Ministry and the Reich Chancellery. Although the captured archives go back to the year 1867, it was decided to limit the present publication to papers relating to the years after 1918, since the object of the publication was "to establish the record of German foreign policy preceding and during World War II." The editorial work was to be performed "on the basis of the highest scholarly objectivity." The editors were to have complete independence in the selection and editing of the documents. Publication was to begin and be concluded as soon as possible. Each Government was "free to publish separately any portion of the documents." In April 1947 the French Government, having requested the right to participate in the project, accepted the terms of this agreement.

In accordance with the understandings on the basis of which the project was originally undertaken, the editors have had complete freedom in the selection and editing of the documents published in this volume. They were selected jointly by the American, British and French editors. For the footnotes and other editorial matter the British editor has entire responsibility. The translations were prepared by the British translation staff. The British editor wishes to record her gratitude to Mr. E. J. Passant, Director of Research and Librarian at the Foreign Office, the Deputy Librarian, Mr. C. H. Fone, and Miss A. C. Johnston, for their co-operation and to Miss E. C. M. Breuning, Mr. T. H. Frame, Miss V. Klein, Mr. G. K. Meister, Mr. D. A. R. H. Webster and Miss F. H. Yorke for their assistance in the preparation of the volume.

### II

The documents published in this the sixth volume of Series D cover the period from March 16, 1939, the day following the German occupation of Prague, to August 8, 1939, the eve of the resumption of direct German-Polish exchanges, which brought to an end the German policy adopted the previous spring of maintaining "complete reserve" in relations with

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<sup>1</sup> In each of the first four volumes published in the series there appears a General Introduction. The editors have not felt it necessary to repeat this introduction in the present and succeeding volumes. Interested readers may wish to refer to it for information on the nature of the German Foreign Ministry archives on which the publication is based, their present condition, and some of the principles which have guided the editors in their work.

Poland, and which was to herald a new, acute phase in the European crisis. Because so many of the main strands of German policy are intertwined, in this brief but crowded period of less than five months, the editors have thought it preferable to present the documents in strictly chronological order rather than to follow their previous practice of arranging them by topics. A topical arrangement of the analytical list at the beginning of the volume is designed to ease the problem of those who wish to read on selected topics. The present volume thus forms the sequel to Volumes III, IV and V in Series D.<sup>1</sup>

The main theme of the present volume is provided by the effects on the European situation of the German occupation of Prague on March 15, 1939. Within a few days of this action, Ribbentrop endeavoured to induce Poland to accept German incorporation of Danzig and "a corridor through the Corridor" in return for a German guarantee. The full German record of this offer is here printed for the first time. The occupation of Prague produced a sharp reversal in British and French policy, as manifested in the guarantee to Poland, which was extended after the Italian occupation of Albania and reports of a German ultimatum to Rumania, to include Greece and Rumania also. Britain and France also entered into negotiations with the Soviet Union. German reactions to this new situation are very fully documented in the present selection, which also includes a certain number of military documents bearing on German foreign policy, in particular the directives issued early in April requiring the German Armed Forces to be prepared for an attack on Poland by September 1.

German relations with Italy during this period include the consolidation of the Axis into a military alliance; Italo-German Staff Talks for concerting a common military policy are documented in Appendix I. In spite of this relationship, Italo-German points of friction remained, especially over such issues as supplying Italy with German coal and anti-aircraft guns, the Croat question and the question of the German-speaking population in the South Tyrol. The documents here printed also provide some evidence of German attempts to enlist Italian aid in promoting a *rapprochement* between Germany and the U.S.S.R. The main outlines of the negotiations directed to this end are known from the documents previously published in *Nazi-Soviet Relations*. Additional documents showing the close attention with which Germany followed the progress of the Anglo-French negotiations in Moscow, and filling in the story of German-Soviet exchanges par-

<sup>1</sup> Since these preceding volumes, with their topical arrangement, do not all end on the same date, they contain a certain amount of material which relates to the period covered by Volume VI. Thus the record of the German occupation of Memel on March 23 is contained in Volume V, whilst the documents on German-Spanish relations in Volume III continue into July, 1939. The present volume likewise contains some items which ante-date March 16, 1939, notably document No. 1, and the Editors' Notes on pp. 81-83 and p. 90.



ticularly on the economic side, are published in the present volume for the first time.

Overseas, Germany's relations with the United States of America deteriorated still further after the occupation of Prague, particularly in the economic sphere as manifested by the controversy over American "countervailing duties". In the Far East, negotiations to bring Japan into a tripartite military alliance with Germany and Italy failed to overcome Japanese reservations.

Further German diplomatic efforts were directed towards the traditional European neutrals and the smaller States of South Eastern Europe. German offers to conclude non-aggression pacts with the Northern States led to the signature of a pact with Denmark, but Sweden, Norway and Finland declined. With the Baltic States non-aggression treaties were signed with Estonia and Latvia, thus completing the treaty system begun by the German Lithuanian Treaty signed on the occasion of the German incorporation of Memel.

In South East Europe German economic power, especially the prospect of the supply of war materials, was used with a view to drawing Yugoslavia, Rumania and Bulgaria into the Axis orbit and a number of documents deal with this politico-economic policy. Hungary, whose disputes with Rumania and attitude to Poland provoked German displeasure, proposed to cooperate in planning for war economy with the Axis Powers. With Turkey, Germany proved unable to prevent the Anglo-Turkish and Franco-Turkish Declarations, nor could she afford entirely to dispense with the supply of Turkish raw materials in order to reinforce diplomatic action with economic pressure.

The present volume also documents German policy towards the various attempts made during this period of mounting tension in Europe to bring about a peaceful settlement of the various issues involved. These attempts include President Roosevelt's peace appeal, proposals for a conference made by the Pope, the exchange of letters between Bonnet and Ribbentrop, the Wohlthat talks in London, and Mussolini's ideas for postponing the outbreak of war. The volume closes with the Polish-Danzig Customs Inspectors' dispute assuming increasingly menacing proportions. Volume VII will take the story down through the last weeks of peace to September 3, 1939.

### III

The documentation for the period covered by this Volume is not complete (see General Introduction, Section IV). The post-1936 Economic Policy Department collection (see Volumes I and II of this Series Appendix I, item 97) contains no files on Russia and none on the Far East for the period 1936-1942. The economic files of the Embassy in Moscow are also missing, but it has been possible to trace German-Russian economic relations from documents contained in the personal

files of Wiehl and Clodius and in the special State Secretary file dealing with the economic negotiations connected with the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact. The documentation of German-Japanese economic relations in the files of the State Secretary and of Clodius for this period is only fragmentary. In particular, nothing has been found on the negotiations leading up to the initialling of the German-Japanese economic agreement on July 28, 1939.

Readers should bear in mind that these documents are presented as a source book for the study of history and not as a finished interpretation of history. It has been the aim throughout to keep any interpretative comment out of the footnotes, and to use them exclusively for the factual elucidation of the text or, on occasion, to draw attention to other publications of documents which contain relevant material. No reference has been made in footnotes to the altered versions of numerous documents, here produced in their original form, which were published in the German White Book, *Dokumente zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges*, Auswärtiges Amt 1939, No. 2 (Berlin 1939). An appendix to be published in Volume VII will give either volume and document numbers (in cases where the original has been reproduced in Volumes VI and VII of this Series) or the film serial and frame numbers of all documents published in the German White Book, falling within the period March 15 to September 3, 1939, of which the editors have been able to trace the originals in the Foreign Ministry Archives.

All the microfilms of documents falling within the period covered by Volumes I to VIII of this Series will be made available to the public simultaneously with the publication of Volume VII.

# ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS<sup>1</sup>

## ALBANIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 6	<i>The Ministry in Albania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by Albanian M.F.A. that Italians have requested immediate reply to their proposals for closer alliance between Italy and Albania. Albania has gone to utmost limits of what was tolerable for her independence; she would offer armed resistance to an Italian invasion.	164	200
Apr. 6	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Albania</i> States that Germany agrees to take over Italian interests in Albania on Italian request; instructions to do nothing which might cast doubts upon German approval of Italian action.	166	203
Apr. 7	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> States that Italian action in Albania has Germany's complete approval; no difficulties are expected from Yugoslavia.  [See also under <i>Italy</i> .]	172	209

## BALTIC STATES

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 22	<i>Editors' Note</i> The German occupation of Memel on March 23, 1939.		80
Apr. 14	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Refers to receipt of confidential information that both Britain and U.S.S.R. have offered guarantees to Estonia and requests information on possible similar offers to other Baltic States.	196	238
Apr. 15	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Estonia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports categorical assurance given by Deputy M.F.A. that Estonia has received no offer of British guarantee.	202	246
Apr. 17	<i>The Minister in Latvia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 213 (see under <i>Europe: General</i> ) and reports on preliminary Latvian reply to German questions on Roosevelt message.	214	265

<sup>1</sup> The documents in this volume have been arranged chronologically. For the convenience of readers who wish to trace topics through the volume this analytical list of documents has been arranged alphabetically by countries or, as in the case of the Baltic and Northern States where policies are closely inter-related, groups of countries. Documents which deal with a number of different countries have been included under the heading "Europe: General". In addition one subject heading, "Military Directives and Conferences", has been included.

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records telephone conversation with German Minister in Riga, whom he informed that the German Government were unable to understand Latvian M.F.A.'s reply to German question about President Roosevelt's message.	228	283
Apr. 19	<i>The Minister in Latvia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 214, and transmits reply from Latvian Government.	230	286
Apr. 24	<i>The Minister in Estonia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Vice M.F.A. and suggests possible exchange of Notes in which Estonians should confirm their policy of neutrality and of holding aloof from groupings of Great Powers.	253	315
Apr. 25	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Estonia</i> Refers to document No. 253, and states that it is not possible at present to make statements of the kind proposed <i>vis-à-vis</i> a country mentioned in the Roosevelt message.	260	323
Apr. 29	<i>An Official of the Economic Policy Department to the Gauleiter in Königsberg</i> Confirms his telephoned instructions that the Führer has decreed that all present Lithuanian economic interests in the Memel territory are to be preserved.	292	360
Apr. 29	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Records a conversation between Ribbentrop and the Estonian Minister who was informed that Hitler was prepared to consider a German-Estonian non-aggression agreement.	294	371
May 1	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Estonia</i> Explains reasons for treating the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between Germany and Estonia as a matter of urgency.	302	394
May 2	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> Assurances given by the Lithuanian Minister that the visit of the Lithuanian Commander-in-Chief to Warsaw in no way denotes an anti-German trend.	311	401
May 4	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> Records private conversation with the Lithuanian Minister, who feared dangers to Baltic States inherent in a possible distribution of guarantees to them, and showed concern over Polish policy of courting Lithuania, especially about Vilna.	328	422
May 4	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> Account by the Latvian Minister of latter's conversation with Ribbentrop, who had accepted the Latvian view that the proposed pact of non-aggression should be on a basis of absolute reciprocity and should not include minorities questions.	329	424
May 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Estonian Minister, who brought a list of points on the German draft for a non-aggression pact.	352	461

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 10	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records statements made by Latvian Minister concerning Latvian and Estonian desire to have included, in projected non-aggression pact with Germany, a reservation with reference to the Latvian-Estonian Treaty of Alliance; Minister cited as precedent, similar reservation in Latvian-Russian Non-Aggression Pact of 1932.	359	469
May 16	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> German proposals for amendments to German-Estonian non-aggression treaty handed to the Estonian Minister. Latter again put forward Estonian Government's reasons for desiring reservation in respect of the Estonian-Latvian Treaty.	390	511
May 19	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> Reviews political relations between Germany and Lithuania; sole present cause for complaint lies in the ill-treatment of the German minority; recommends this be taken up with the Lithuanian Government.	408	538
May 22	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Account of reception by Hitler of Lithuanian M.F.A., and subsequent conversation between latter and Ribbentrop on German-Lithuanian relations; assurances on Lithuanian policy of strict neutrality.	421	554
May 27	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Reviews course of negotiations leading to German-Lithuanian agreements on trade relations, Memel problems, and establishment of Lithuanian free zone in Port of Memel and provisions contained in these agreements.	445	595
June 3	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Views expressed by Estonian Minister, who is an expert on Russia and believes Russia is only waiting for a friendly gesture from the totalitarian States, whom she mistrusts less than the democratic States.	469	630
June 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division VI</i> Reviews policy of neutrality pursued by Estonia and Latvia, both of whom have rejected a Soviet Note, stating that they would themselves preserve their national independence.	484	650
June 7	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Records reception of Latvian M.F.A. by Hitler and Ribbentrop; Hitler's views on economic foreign policy and advantages of Germany as a trading partner.	485	651
June 7	<i>Editors' Note</i> Signature of German-Estonian and German-Latvian Non-Aggression Treaties.		664
June 29	<i>SS-Gruppenführer Heydrich to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Letter, enclosing a report on the supporters of Voldemaras, who are pressing for assistance from the Reich, and expressing view that, whilst financial aid could be granted, no arms should be supplied.	587	812

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Latvia</i> Instructions to ascertain whether Latvian Government have been informed by Britain or Russia of negotiations in Moscow on guarantee for Baltic States. In event of Latvia receiving such guarantee, Germany expects her to reject it.	589	814
July 3	<i>The Minister in Latvia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 589 and reports information supplied by Latvian M.F.A. on Russian and British communications about guarantees of the Baltic States.  [See also under <i>Europe: General and Northern States.</i> ]	608	836

## BELGIUM

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 31	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has been informed by Belgian Ambassador, in connection with Anglo-French conversations on assistance to Switzerland, Holland and Belgium, that nothing new has been asked of, or received from, Brussels.	139	174
June 12	<i>Ambassador Bülow-Schwante to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Believes has found a suitable person who, on account of personal relations with the King, could be employed by Germany at a critical moment.	516	712
June 12	<i>Ambassador Bülow-Schwante to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Refers to instructions to tell a leading Belgian general that Berlin has reports on contacts existing between the Belgian and French armies, and describes the results of such action as he has been able to take.	517	713
June 27	<i>Ambassador Bülow-Schwante to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter, referring to document No. 517, and describing conversation with Belgian Minister for War, to whom he stated it was known in Berlin that Belgian General Staff had initiated talks with French General Staff. Minister emphatically denied this report.	575	799
July 21	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with his Belgian colleague, who said that King of the Belgians had recently explained to President Lebrun absolute necessity for Belgium to pursue a policy of strict independence towards all sides.	694	951
July 21	<i>Minute by a Member of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Conveys Ribbentrop's instructions that Weizsäcker should make representations to Belgian Ambassador about present Belgian press campaign, and should inform him confidentially of the Bonnet-Ribbentrop correspondence (documents Nos. 602 and 669—see under <i>France</i> ).	697	953
July 22	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Belgian Chargé d'Affaires to whom he spoke as instructed in document No. 697.  [See also under <i>Europe: General and Netherlands.</i> ]	701	956

## BULGARIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 17	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Has informed the Bulgarian Minister that Germany is prepared to increase the arms credit to Bulgaria by 20 million RM under certain conditions. Minister expressed disappointment that increase was not greater and mentioned possibility of supplying Bulgaria from Czech army stocks.	17	17
Mar. 21	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with the Bulgarian Minister, who requested information on the general situation, and pressed for increase in arms credit to Bulgaria.	63	73
Mar. 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Bulgarian Minister President, who stated he had informed Turks that Bulgaria declined to enter Balkan Pact without previous frontier revision. Minister President enquired about German offers to Rumania and requested support for Bulgarian nationalist aspirations.	67	75
Apr. 13	<i>The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 186 (see under <i>Europe: General</i> ) and reports that King Boris has assured him that no attempt has been made to involve Bulgaria in British encirclement policy.	190	232
Apr. 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has been asked by Bulgarian Ministers of Commerce and Finance to see that Germany delivers equipment for two divisions to Bulgaria.	218	268
Apr. 21	<i>German-Bulgarian Secret Protocol</i> The German Government agree that the Bulgarian Government may place orders in Germany for the delivery of war materials except aircraft to the value of 45 million RM, on same conditions as agreed in Secret Protocol of March 12, 1938. Article 6 of previous Protocol revised accordingly.	243	303
May 3	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with the Bulgarian Minister on British and Turkish efforts to achieve agreement between Bulgaria and Rumania on the Dobruja question, and on Bulgaria's other aspirations.	320	415
May 8	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports account given him by Minister President of results of second visit of Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Potemkin.	346	456
May 16	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Bulgarian Minister about possible supply of former Czech war material to Bulgaria.	392	514
May 21	<i>The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with King Boris, who requested favourable consideration for Bulgaria in distribution of supplies of Czech arms and asked for some submarines.	415	547

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
July 5	<i>The State Secretary to the Minister in Bulgaria</i> Refers to agreement reached with Ciano during latter's recent visit to Berlin over trying to bring about <i>rapprochement</i> between Bulgaria and the Axis. Discusses best methods of pursuing this aim. Caution should be observed over Bulgaria's territorial aspirations in view of Germany's relations with Bulgaria's neighbours.	476	640
June 5	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Minister Richthofen</i> Letter explaining German policy of giving active support to Bulgaria's further <i>rapprochement</i> to Axis Powers, and stating intention to invite Bulgarian Minister President to visit Berlin.	479	644
June 6	<i>The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Bulgarian Minister President, who feared he was mistrusted by Germany. Subject of supplying Bulgaria with arms from Czech stocks also raised.	480	645
June 9	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Bulgaria</i> Refers to document No. 480 and instructs Minister to raise question of Bulgaria's services in return for the political support implied in German delivery of arms. Enquiries should be made as to Bulgaria's position on accession to Anti-Comintern Pact.	500	687
June 12	<i>The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 500 and reports conversation with Minister President who stated that question of Bulgaria's accession to Anti-Comintern Pact had never been raised officially, but had been unofficially discouraged by Mussolini. Minister unable to give a definite reply without authority from the King.	508	698
June 24	<i>German-Bulgarian Secret Protocol</i> German and Bulgarian Governments agree that Bulgaria may place orders in Germany for aircraft material and war material to prescribed value. Conditions of payment laid down. Bulgarian Government to supply additional raw materials in part payment, and to permit German industry to exploit certain Bulgarian mineral deposits.	566	785
July 5	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Record of conversation between Hitler and Bulgarian Minister President; Hitler's views on common lot of Germany and Bulgaria as countries deprived of their rights; Kiosseivanov's request for accelerated arms deliveries; fears of Turkish and Rumanian intentions; proposal by Hitler for joint consultation to establish what aims Bulgaria should pursue and what assistance she would require.	617	847
July 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Record of conversation between Ribbentrop and the Bulgarian Minister President; review by Ribbentrop of Hitler's foreign policy; statements by Kiosseivanov on Bulgarian policy of friendship with Germany; promises by Ribbentrop to expedite arms deliveries and proposals for clarifying points on Bulgaria's position as discussed with Hitler.	618	852
July 12	<i>The Legation in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with King, who expressed satisfaction at outcome of Minister President's visit to Berlin, and requested favourable consideration for Bulgaria's requirements in war material.	656	904



Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
July 12	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht</i> Refers to promise made by Führer to Bulgarian Minister President about Bulgarian requests for war material, and asks for statement on what can be done to meet certain requests.	659	908
July 14	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Reports conversation with King Boris on July 11, in which King reviewed in detail Bulgaria's position and aims of her foreign policy.	673	923
July 20	<i>The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Bulgarian Minister President, who expressed pleasure at results of his Berlin visit; Kiosseivanov disappointed at outcome of his discussions with Yugoslavs, and disquieted by reports of Turkish military preparations on Thracian frontier.	689	944
July 27	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht</i> Refers to document No. 659 and recommends acceding to King of Bulgaria's request for loan of two small German submarines until those ordered by Bulgaria are ready.  [See also under <i>Europe: General.</i> ]	728	1005

## EUROPE: GENERAL

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 16	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Reviews repercussions of occupation of Czechia on economic discussions with Britain and France. Visit of British Ministers to Berlin cancelled. Negotiations due to conclude on March 16, and British delegation returning to Britain without visiting Berlin. Sudden departure of chief French negotiator.	11	11
Mar. 21	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Instructions to German Missions to discover what and to which States British <i>démarches</i> have been made to bring about an association of "peaceful States" against further German expansion, and what replies have been given.	58	67
Mar. 24	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Summarizes reports available on progress and results of British diplomatic action towards the formation of united front against Germany; concludes that final results of British action will probably prove very meagre.	83	99
Apr. 1	<i>Editors' Note</i> Hitler's speech at Wilhelmshaven on April 1.		183
Apr. 3	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Comments on British declaration of assistance to Poland and states the attitude to be adopted towards it in conversations.	147	185

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 5	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Informs Missions of information available on British <i>démarche</i> in Ankara and of Turkish reply.	160	195
Apr. 12	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> Instructions to make no <i>démarche</i> on the British encirclement policy, but to make clear, in conversations, what would be the German attitude to any further States who might participate in such a British combination.	186	228
Apr. 17	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> Instructions at once to enquire orally of all Governments mentioned by Roosevelt in his message (document No. 200—see under <i>United States</i> ) whether their countries feel menaced by Germany, and whether they have authorized Roosevelt to make his proposal.	213	264
Apr. 17	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Reviews information available on antecedents of French and British guarantees to Greece and Rumania, and on conversations held by Rumanian M.F.A. Istanbul.	221	270
Apr. 22	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Refers to report from London Embassy of a British proposal to U.S.S.R. that the latter should offer a treaty of assistance under certain terms to Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Rumania, and gives instructions on what action is to be taken with various Governments concerned.	246	305
Apr. 22	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IX</i> Summarizes the reactions of the various countries to the two German questions in document No. 213.	250	309
Apr. 28	<i>Editors' Note</i> Speech by Hitler to the Reichstag.		355
Apr. 29	<i>Circular from the Director of the Political Department</i> Informs Embassies in London, Paris and Moscow of report by Papen on his first conversation with Turkish M.F.A. Comments on Turkish attitude.	289	365
Apr. 30	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits a review of the course and results of the British encirclement action to date, with instructions to report any additions or amendments required.	299	382
May 21	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Missions are requested to make known to official departments and to the press the truth about the incident at Kalthof on the Danzig-Polish frontier, in contradiction to the Polish version.	416	548
July 22	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Encloses letter from the OKW giving Hitler's new decisions in respect of deliveries of war material to foreign countries, and reviews present state of these deliveries to Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Italy, Rumania and Turkey.	703	958
July 22	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Instructions to Missions abroad to conduct more vigorous propaganda and to submit detailed reports.	707	965

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 July 29	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Supplements document No. 703 with further review of position on war material deliveries to Bulgaria, Rumania, Italy and Yugoslavia.  [See also under the separate countries.]	738	1017

## FAR EAST

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Mar. 23	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned from Japanese press source that Japanese Five-Minister Conference has decided to open diplomatic negotiations with Germany for the purpose of concluding a military alliance directed against Russia.	70	81
Mar. 23	<i>Editors' Note</i> Course of German-Japanese negotiations on a tripartite pact.		81
Apr. 24	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports serious clashes in Japanese Cabinet over question of strengthening Anti-Comintern Pact: Army attacking Foreign Minister's conduct of these negotiations. Considers prospects favourable for Germany.	254	317
Apr. 26	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 254 and reports that Japanese press continues to exert pressure on Government to declare themselves in favour of strengthening the Anti-Comintern Pact. Has advised Vice M.F.A. that a public statement on Japan's attitude to Anglo-Russian consultations on the Far East would be desirable before the Führer's speech.	266	334
Apr. 26	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Japan</i> Informs the Ambassador personally of course of secret discussions between Berlin, Rome and Tokyo for a defensive alliance, and instructs him to take no action but to report on developments.	270	337
Apr. 27	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 270, and reports has learned that instructions have been sent to Japanese Ambassador in Berlin that Japan agrees to military alliance with Germany and Italy.	275	346
Apr. 28	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 275, and enquires whether Japanese Government have dropped their reservation about interpreting treaty to Western Powers.	285	360
Apr. 30	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 285, and reports differences in the Cabinet over question of including reservation in the alliance, and danger of Cabinet resigning.	298	381

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 1	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 298 and states that although the Anti-Comintern thesis may be developed in the preamble to the proposed tripartite pact, no anti-Russian tendency may appear in the articles of the pact; the nature and extent of the assistance to be rendered are reserved for special secret discussions after the conclusion of the pact.	304	396
May 2	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 298 and reports that Japanese Cabinet continue divided on alliance question. The Army hope that, in view of commitments in China, invocation of alliance will be delayed as long as possible.	306	398
May 2	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 306, and replies that both Germany and Italy have greatest interest in long period of peace.	307	399
May 4	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that further decisions by Japanese Cabinet are not to be expected for next few days. On basis of reports from Europe, Japanese Foreign Ministry acting on assumption that war will break out sometime between next autumn and spring.	322	416
May 4	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has been requested by M.F.A. to transmit text of a declaration by the Japanese Minister President to Hitler: whilst Japan is prepared to accept the principle of military assistance to Germany and Italy even if U.S.S.R. not involved, she is not at present able to render effective assistance. Furthermore, Japan must exercise utmost circumspection in giving explanations of the agreement on publication.	326	420
May 6	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 326, and reports what he has learned from various sources of the views of the Army on the Japanese Minister President's statement (document No. 326), and what occasioned it.	339	442
May 8	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 339, and reports further details regarding the present position of negotiations on the alliance.	344	454
May 8	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Japanese Ambassador, who enquired whether projected German-Italian pact would be consistent with Berlin-Rome-Tokyo draft treaty.	345	455
May 11	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 344 and reports information supplied by War Minister about attitude of Japanese Navy to alliance negotiations. Transmits message sent by Japanese Minister President about latter's declaration (document No. 326).	363	473
May 15	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 363, and gives reasons already advanced to Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, why, in the German and Italian view, conclusion of their pact of alliance cannot prejudice the trilateral negotiations for a three Power pact. Instructions to press Japanese Government for speedy decision.	382	494

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 15	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan</i> Transmits for the Ambassador personally (i) the draft tripartite pact for joint consultation and mutual assistance with secret protocol, as already agreed, (ii) draft of a new article on relation of present pact to German-Italian pact, (iii) a draft note on possible statements to be made by Japanese Government, (iv) a draft formal statement to be made orally by the Japanese Ambassador before signature of pact.	383	496
May 16	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that the Japanese Government attach no practical importance to assurances from the French Ambassador that the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations are limited to Europe.	388	509
May 17	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 382, and reports has used these arguments with General Machijiri, who described Navy's continuing misgivings over proposed tripartite pact. Recommends that Hitler make friendly gesture of reply to Japanese Minister President.	400	522
May 20	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits summary of statement for Ribbentrop from Japanese War Minister, describing Japanese Cabinet decision on military pact. Japanese Foreign Ministry to inform German Government by May 21. Army anxious for pact to be initialled secretly, simultaneously with the signature of the German-Italian pact.	410	541
May 20	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Conversation with Japanese Counsellor, who endeavoured to obtain information about the forthcoming German-Italian pact and requested that the text be communicated confidentially to the Japanese as soon as possible.	412	543
May 22	<i>The Japanese Ambassador to the Reich Foreign Minister</i> Letter transmitting his Government's telegram of congratulations on the conclusion of the German-Italian Alliance.	425	561
May 23	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 410, and gives an account, derived from officials in Japanese Foreign Ministry, of the genesis of Cabinet decision of May 20.	427	564
May 27	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 427 and reports information from Army sources on disagreements in Japanese Cabinet over decision on pact reached on May 20.	444	594
May 28	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to documents Nos. 410 and 427 and states that promised communication of official decision by Japanese Cabinet has not been received. Instructions to make clear that non-arrival of communication is occasioning misgivings about Japanese attitude.	447	599
May 31	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 447, and reports action taken; describes varying accounts given him of reasons for failure of Japanese Cabinet to reach a decision on alliance question.	457	614

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
June 1	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to forthcoming visit of former German Naval Attaché to Tokyo, and possibilities of influencing Japanese Navy in direction of support for German views about alliance question.	462	623
June 2	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 462 and gives Ambassador arguments to use against Japan's fear of America in the economic field.	466	628
June 3	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 462 and reports has been informed that Navy have at last accepted the Army's proposal on alliance question.	467	629
June 7	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from Army sources about instructions sent to Japanese Ambassador in Berlin that, in alliance question, Japan would be prepared automatically to take part in any war of Germany's, provided Russia were one of Germany's adversaries.	487	656
June 8	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned through Japanese Embassy that Japanese Government have warned Britain that conclusion of a British-Soviet alliance would considerably increase difficulties of reaching Anglo-Japanese settlement.	493	665
June 14	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from Japanese Foreign Ministry as to reasons for Japanese attitude to Britain over Tientsin and objectives of Japanese policy in China.	526	725
June 16	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Italian Ambassador, on basis of information from Japanese Ambassador in Rome, has given present Japanese version of alliance, namely open treaty with automatic obligation of assistance in case of war, and secret protocol with reservation that obligations not automatic unless USA and U.S.S.R. are belligerents.	535	734
June 17	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan</i> Instructions that Admiral Foerster should make clear to Japanese Navy that only a perfectly clear alliance with Axis will ensure American neutrality.	537	737
June 17	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan</i> States was only informed officially by Japanese Ambassador on June 14 of latest Japanese decisions on alliance. Oshima's interpretation of these decisions. Japanese still held that statement about Japan's limited military capacities must be recorded in writing, which unacceptable to Axis. Discussion with Japanese Ambassador in Rome, who put forward his own proposals; these also unacceptable to Axis.	538	737
June 20	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 538, and reports on his efforts to clear up Japanese "mental reservations". A success for Japanese Army in Tientsin proceedings important for alliance.	548	750

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 21	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 548 and conveys Ribbentrop's approval for Ambassador to continue talks, but he should not press the question as to when treaty is to be concluded.	553	755
June 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan</i> Refers to document No. 553, and requests information on results of deliberations of Five-Minister Conference referred to in document No. 548.	591	815
July 1	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 591 and states has not been able to obtain complete clarity regarding Japanese reservations which are variously interpreted. Five-Minister Conference not yet resumed.	597	821
July 5	<i>Ambassador Ott to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter describing Admiral Foerster's efforts to influence Japanese Navy; review of differences between Army and Navy on question of unconditional alliance.	619	858
July 19	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department.</i> Conversation with Japanese Counsellor, who supplied information about latest events on Manchukuo Outer Mongolian frontier, and then endeavoured to obtain information about developments in German relations with U.S.S.R. Counsellor expressed fear of Germany affording U.S.S.R. more favourable economic treatment than Japan.	688	942
July 22	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Refers to fears expressed by the Japanese Counsellor of Embassy that Germany might grant more favourable economic terms to U.S.S.R. than to Japan, and reviews offers on supply of machine tools made respectively to Japan and U.S.S.R.	704	961
July 24	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Japanese Ambassador, who knew nothing of French press reports that Japanese Minister President had held out prospect of Japanese neutrality in a European conflict, but undertook to refer to his Government.	713	974
July 25	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with Japanese Counsellor who furnished information on the Anglo-Japanese negotiations at present in progress.	719	992
July 28	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Admiral Foerster, recently returned from Japan, who gave views of German Ambassador there that it would be expedient first to conclude a more modest treaty with Japan.	732	1011
July 28	<i>Editors' Note</i> German-Japanese Economic Agreement initialled on July 28.		
July 29	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews situation arising out of recent Anglo-Japanese agreement as it affects Germany and transmits confidential requests from Japanese supporters of alliance with Axis, that Germany should hasten its conclusion. Recommends favourable consideration for Japanese suggestions.	735	1013

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Aug. 2	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with Japanese Counsellor on question of preferential treatment for German trade interests in North China; Japanese concern about possible German deliveries of war material under Haplo Treaty with Chinese Government and about Russo-German economic negotiations and possibility of U.S.S.R. obtaining more favourable treatment than Japan.	756	1044
Aug. 3	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 735 and reports has learned that Anglo-Japanese Tientsin negotiations likely to produce agreement. Army concern at danger of this development for prospects of alliance with Axis.  [See also under <i>Italy</i> .]	762	1052

## FRANCE

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records that he has refused to accept from French Ambassador (attached) Note of protest from his Government about German action in Czecho-Slovakia, on the grounds that such a step is in contradiction to views expressed to Ribbentrop by Bonnet and also to Franco-German Declaration of December 6, 1938.	20	20
Mar. 18	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports introduction of bill giving French Government full powers to take measures for national defence. Reviews political situation in the light of debates on the bill.	22	23
Mar. 20	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses French public opinion after promulgation of special powers law; notes emphasis on necessity of defending Rumania and attitude towards Franco-Italian relations.	49	51
Mar. 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Submits a report on an agent's conversation with the former French Minister President, Flandin, who discussed repercussions of Germany's annexation of Czecho-Slovakia on Franco-German understanding.	69	77
Mar. 24	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to reports in the Paris press that on the occasion of the French President's visit to London, Chamberlain, Halifax and Bonnet signed a protocol or exchanged <i>aide-mémoires</i> , by which France and Britain undertook to assist the Netherlands and Switzerland should they be attacked.	84	101
Apr. 10	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Sends report from reliable source on views expressed by French Minister of Marine Campinchi; Germany's present policy renders war inevitable.	177	212
Apr. 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on the implications of the French declaration concerning support for Rumania and Greece and concerning the Franco-Polish alliance.	188	230



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 29	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on reaction in France to Hitler's speech; considers effect has been reassuring in spite of adverse attitude of press.	290	366
May 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with French Ambassador, who enquired about possibility of further German-Polish conversations; in replying, Weizsäcker tried to make clear to French Ambassador that Beck's present attitude provided no point of contact.	353	463
May 13	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Analyses the political situation in France in the light of Daladier's speech on behalf of the Government on May 11.	379	489
May 17	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned that in consequence of visit to Paris of Polish War Minister, Kasprzycki, a French military delegation is shortly to leave for Poland.	399	522
May 20	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A., whose attention he drew to the dangers for France of following the British policy of encirclement of Germany. Bonnet reaffirmed his own resolve to work for peace but stressed loss of confidence resulting from German occupation of Prague.	409	539
May 23	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits memorandum from reliable informant about a conversation with former French Minister President Flandin on the European situation.	430	569
June 5	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses political mentality of the French which causes them to have no understanding for basic political demands, such as right to "living space".	477	641
June 6	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on conversation between an Embassy informant and former French Minister President Flandin; latter's views on international situation and French policy.	481	647
June 6	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits information obtained by an informant on Anglo-Franco-Polish military conversations.	482	648
June 9	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits report on a conversation between an Embassy informant and French Deputy, Marcel Déat, who believed that Germany's aspirations in Eastern Europe could be realized peacefully after a quiet period of waiting.	501	688
June 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with French Ambassador, who spoke in similar terms to those used by British Ambassador, and said that, Anglo-Franco-Russian pact once concluded, diplomatic conversations with Axis Powers could take place more easily.	539	740
June 21	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in France</i> Instructions to Ambassador to remain in Paris until informed of date when he should visit Berlin for discussion with Ribbentrop; meantime to avoid important political conversations.	552	754

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 29	<i>Editors' Note</i> Prolongation of Franco-German Trade and Payments Agreement of July 10, 1937.		813
June 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in France</i> Informs Ambassador that Ribbentrop has again defined instructions given Welczeck orally on what he should say in diplomatic conversations, particularly to French M.F.A., on problem of Poland.	592	816
June 30	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with French Ambassador on general political situation; Weizsäcker developed the same line of thought as contained in latest instructions to German Ambassador in Paris (document No. 592).	594	818
July 1	<i>Note from the French Government</i> States that the Franco-German Declaration of December 6, 1938, does not affect the special relations of France to the countries of Eastern Europe and stresses France's determination to fulfil her obligations under the Franco-Polish alliance; states what circumstances would bring these obligations into play.	602	827
July 2	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 592 and reports carrying out his instructions in conversation with French M.F.A. on the political situation. Bonnet replied by describing his own policy and gave him a Note for transmission to Ribbentrop (document No. 602).	603	828
July 9	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in France</i> Instructions to make energetic <i>démarche</i> to French Minister President regarding the French Government's action in denying Abetz entry into France and to obtain requisite permission.	640	886
July 12	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 640 and reports representations made to French Minister President about Abetz case.	658	907
July 13	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in France</i> Conveys Ribbentrop's views that Ambassador has not conducted <i>démarche</i> on Abetz case firmly enough. States Abetz will be returning to France shortly and instructs Welczeck to report what steps taken to facilitate this.	664	913
July 13	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with French Ambassador, to whom he represented harm done by British Prime Minister in his latest speech.	665	914
July 14	<i>The State Secretary to the Ambassador in France</i> Instructions to transmit enclosed letter from Ribbentrop to Bonnet as soon as possible. Letter replies to document No. 602, and describes German position on German-French relations in general and on Danzig question in particular.	669	917
July 15	<i>Ambassador Welczeck to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter complaining of attempts to discredit him with Büro Ribbentrop by representing him as opposed to Abetz and latter's activities in France.	676	928

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 July 20	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports <i>démarche</i> made to French Minister President on Abetz affair. Daladier complained of discrepancies between the two versions of what had occurred, and promised to re-examine the case.	690	946
July 25	<i>Foreign Minister Bonnet to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Letter in reply to document No. 669. States that at no time, either before or after Franco-German Declaration of December 6, 1938, has it been possible for the German Government to think that France had decided to disinterest herself in Eastern Europe; France is eager for peace but will fulfil her obligations under the Franco-Polish Treaty of Alliance.	722	998
July 28	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from well informed sources as to reasons why Britain and France have agreed to enter into military discussions with U.S.S.R. before reaching agreement on a political treaty.	731	1010
July 30	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews emergency decrees approved that day by French Council of Ministers.	740	1019
July 30	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 731, and states that preparations for the despatch of French and British military delegations to Moscow are proceeding actively.	741	1021
Aug. 2	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in France</i> Ambassador instructed to remain in Paris until Abetz assured of unhindered stay there; Abetz to be given every assistance in conducting his lawsuit against French journalist Kérillis.	753	1043
Aug. 4	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in France</i> Informs Ambassador that, though no valid expulsion order exists against Abetz, he has been refused entry into France. Conveys Ribbentrop's instructions to make a direct approach forthwith either to Daladier or Bonnet.	767	1062
[See also under <i>Turkey</i> .]			

## GREAT BRITAIN

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Mar. 16	<i>Circular of the Director of the Political Department</i> States that, on March 15, British Ambassador transmitted a letter (document No. 234 in vol. IV) to Ribbentrop, and summarizes contents.	9	10
Mar. 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with British Ambassador to whom he gave the reasons for the German action in Czecho-Slovakia.	16	16
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> In reply to British Ambassador's request for an interview to deliver a Note of protest from his Government, has informed him that such an interview would serve no useful purpose.	19	19

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 18	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses motives for Prime Minister's speech on March 17. Refers to report in the press alleging attempted German economic subjugation of Rumania in return for German guarantee of Rumanian independence, and requests instructions.	23	25
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Instructions telephoned to Ambassador in London to ask the British Government to explain what they intend by the way they have announced the recall of their Ambassador from Berlin.	25	26
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records receipt of (attached) Note from the British Ambassador, which protests against the German action in Czecho-Slovakia, characterizing it as complete repudiation of the Munich Agreement.	26	27
Mar. 18	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews changes in the British attitude towards Germany brought about by events in Czecho-Slovakia, and speculates on probable future course of British foreign policy.	35	36
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Adds to his record in document No. 16 that the British Ambassador stated that, although Britain was not directly interested in the Czecho-Slovak territory, Henderson feared that Germany was now embarking on a policy of territorial expansion, which would end by nullifying prospects of an Anglo-German understanding.	36	40
Mar. 19	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that the Rumanian Minister in London, on his own initiative, has told the Foreign Office of unreasonable German economic demands on Rumania.	42	46
Mar. 20	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to statements by Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary and reports what he has heard from reliable informants respecting British intentions about guarantee arrangements with certain States.	48	50
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Records Ribbentrop's instructions that any fresh British initiative for a later visit to Berlin by the British Ministers is not to be agreed.	54	62
Mar. 28	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports statement by the British Government that they do not intend to take any economic measures against Germany as "reprisal" for German measures in Bohemia and Moravia.	116	145
Mar. 29	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews state of British negotiations on declaration projects as revealed in speeches in British Parliament and in press comment; considerations affecting these negotiations, and the treaty systems which appear to be planned.	121	150
Mar. 31	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits text of Prime Minister's statement in House of Commons on British Government's interim guarantee to Poland.	136	171

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 31	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 136, and reports further statements on British assistance by Foreign Office spokesman.	137	172
Apr. 4	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Enquiry by British Counsellor of Embassy as to whether Hitler's speech (of April 1) should be taken as a denunciation of the Naval Agreement. Has replied that denunciation of an agreement takes place through diplomatic channels.	156	193
Apr. 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information given by Italian Chargé d'Affaires on exchanges between Italy and Britain before and after Italian occupation of Albania.	182	219
Apr. 11	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on the visit of the British Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade to Warsaw, Moscow, Helsinki and Stockholm, and comments on possible significance of British negotiations for a new trade agreement with the U.S.S.R. which are shortly to take place in London	183	220
Apr. 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits text of Prime Minister's announcement in the House of Commons of the British guarantee to Greece and Rumania.	189	232
Apr. 17	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Political Department</i> Records visit from British Chargé d'Affaires who spoke of German complaints about British encirclement policy, German policy on Danzig and the Czech question and the possible return of a British Ambassador to Berlin.	220	269
Apr. 19	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from a reliable source as to proposals submitted by Britain and France to Soviet Russia for the so-called pact of mutual assistance and enquiry by Soviet Government as to a <i>quid pro quo</i> .	233	289
Apr. 21	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 233 and reports the points contained in the Soviet counter proposals to the British proposals he has previously reported.	230	299
Apr. 26	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 239, and reports has learned that British reply to Soviet proposals for Three Power Pact will be tantamount to a rejection.	269	336
Apr. 26	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the British Ambassador, who came to announce the British statement on conscription, and stated that Chamberlain believed that best way to maintain peace was for Britain to demonstrate her readiness to fight in case of necessity, whilst remaining determined to seek peaceful solutions.	272	344
Apr. 27	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Instructs Chargé d'Affaires to arrange for an interview at the Foreign Office on April 28 to deliver a memorandum, at a time to coincide with start of Hitler's speech.	273	345

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 27	<i>Note to the British Government</i> The German Government consider that, in view of recent British policy, they must regard the British Government as having unilaterally put out of force the German-British Naval Agreement of 1935 and the Declaration and Part III of the Naval Agreement of 1937, but that the German Government will continue to abide by the qualitative provisions of the 1937 Agreement.	277	351
Apr. 27	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Kordt to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Transmits a memorandum on a <i>démarche</i> alleged to have been made by Britain to Poland on April 19.	278	353
Apr. 28	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> States that the denunciation of the German-British Naval Agreement does not apply to the "qualitative" provisions of the 1937 Agreement; instructions to emphasize in conversations that German Government wish to avoid naval armaments race.	282	357
Apr. 29	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on British reactions to Hitler's speech.	291	368
May 2	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from a Japanese diplomat that no headway is being made in the Anglo-Soviet negotiations on account of Russian demands for an alliance and guarantee of their Far Eastern frontiers.	309	400
May 2	<i>Editors' Note</i> Interview between Ribbentrop and the British Ambassador on May 2.		407
May 4	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 269 and reports that British Government continue to decline the Soviet proposal for a pact of mutual assistance between Britain, France and Russia.	327	422
May 8	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 327 and reports information from a reliable source on British counter proposals to the Soviet proposal for an Anglo-Soviet pact of assistance.	343	453
May 11	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses statement by Chamberlain in House of Commons on Anglo-Russian negotiations. Considers that this statement concealed continuing fundamental divergence of views in negotiations.	362	472
May 11	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Selzam to Ministerialdirektor Wiesel</i> Letter announcing the impending visit to Berlin of Mr. Henry Drummond-Wolff. The visit, although private, is undertaken with the knowledge of the Prime Minister's closest advisers.	368	477
May 14	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Summarizes a confidential conversation on Anglo-German economic relations with Mr. H. Drummond-Wolff from London, who conveyed that he was in Berlin with the knowledge of the close adviser of the British Cabinet.	380	491

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 15	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 343 and reports information from a reliable source about the terms of the Soviet reply, presented that evening, to the British proposals previously reported. Has learned that Lord Halifax intends to negotiate directly with Potemkin in Geneva.	381	493
May 15	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the British Ambassador, who said that Britain did not desire war, and wished to avoid it through a German-Polish settlement, but was nevertheless determined to go to Poland's help if Germany tried to alter the status of Danzig by force.	385	502
May 17	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 381 and reports that British intention of continuing negotiations at Geneva by talks between Halifax and Potemkin has been frustrated by Maisky's being sent to Geneva instead.	401	524
May 18	<i>Editors' Note</i> Conversation between Halifax and Dirksen on Anglo-German relations.		538
May 31	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Sends information from reliable source about what is contained in a new British proposal presented in Moscow on May 27.	458	616
June 3	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports disappointment in Britain over Soviet Union's attitude in negotiations.	468	629
June 5	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 458 and reports that new Soviet note to Britain contains, in more conciliatory form, the objections formulated by Molotov in his speech of May 31.	473	634
	<i>Editors' Note</i> Wohlthat's conversations in London on June 6-7.		651
Undated	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Impressions gained by Adam von Trott zu Solz from conversations with British Foreign Secretary, Prime Minister and other leading politicians and journalists during a fact finding visit to Britain, on June 1-8.	497	674
June 12	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 473 and reports has learned that British answer to Soviet Note has been sent first to Paris for approval; gives substance of British draft reply.	511	708
June 13	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with British Ambassador, who stated that, the Russian pact once concluded, discussions with Berlin should be possible, and spoke of London's willingness to negotiate with Berlin on disarmament, economic relations and the colonial question.	521	718
June 20	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop</i> Confidential report on statements by British journalist in Berlin, who had just returned from London, about British public opinion there.	551	753

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
June 24	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews factors underlying recent trends in British foreign policy; detects disillusionment over consequences of encirclement action. Discusses whether Chamberlain's position is strong enough to enable him to make a constructive move towards Germany.	564	780
June 27	<i>Memorandum from the British Embassy in Germany</i> British Government's reply to the German Memorandum of April 27 (document No. 277). Reasons why British Government cannot agree that there has been any change in their policy to justify action of German Government over Anglo-German Naval Agreements, and request to know meaning of German offer to enter into negotiations in regard to future problems.	571	791
June 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with British Ambassador. Weizsäcker contested Ambassador's view that conclusion of British talks in Moscow would be beneficial for initiation of German-British talks.	572	797
June 28	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Dirksen</i> Letter commenting on certain indications of a British inclination to enter into discussions with Germany on outstanding questions.	577	802
June 29	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports terms of a British formula for negotiations with the U.S.S.R. sent to British Ambassador in Moscow. Considers that British and French instructions admit of conclusion that Russian demands are to be met in full.	581	807
June 30	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses Halifax's speech on foreign affairs made on June 29 and its reception by the press.	593	817
July 3	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 593 and describes campaign by certain circles in Britain to create a war psychosis by spreading false reports from Danzig.	606	832
July 7	<i>The Auslandsorganisation to the Chief of the Reich Chancellery</i> Encloses a situation report by Press Director of Landesgruppe for Great Britain dealing with public opinion, military preparations, and organization of propaganda in Britain.	630	874
July 10	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 606 and states that campaign of incitement about coup in Danzig being imminent has collapsed. Analyses British Government policy towards Germany.	645	891
July 10	<i>Editors' Note</i> Statement by British Prime Minister on recent events in Danzig.		898
July 12	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information received from reliable source about disagreements in Anglo-Franco-Soviet pact negotiations over interpretation of term "internal aggression" and over military pact question.	657	905



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
July 14	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the British Ambassador after latter's short visit to London; Henderson enquired about possibility of a press truce, and criticized Commander King-Hall's propaganda by news letters.	671	921
July 14	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the British Ambassador about German failure to issue <i>exequatur</i> for British Consul General in Prague, relation of this question to British non-recognition of Protectorate, and Anglo-German negotiations on Czech gold reserves in United Kingdom.	672	922
July 14	<i>Counselor Erich Kordt to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter conveying Ribbentrop's instructions that Ambassador Dirksen should await special instructions before returning to London from his normal leave.	674	926
July 17	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 567 (see under <i>Rumania</i> ) and reports has learned from reliable source that British Ambassador in Moscow instructed to make no further concessions to Soviet wishes on indirect aggression and on a military pact.	679	930
July 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the British Ambassador whom he informed of substance of Bonnet-Ribbentrop correspondence (documents Nos. 602 and 669—see under <i>France</i> ). Subject of press truce further discussed.	682	932
July 21	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 679 and reports that, in order to break deadlock in negotiations with Moscow, France has proposed to Britain dropping objections to simultaneous conclusion of a political treaty and military convention.	695	952
July 22	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that during Wohlthat's visit to London he was invited to have discussions with Hudson and Sir H. Wilson; British press publishing fantastic reports about these discussions.	698	954
July 24	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 698, and reports press publicity given to alleged statements by Hudson on his conversations with Wohlthat, which are being exploited by the opponents of any understanding with Germany.	708	966
July 24	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses possibilities of British Government turning to a more constructive policy towards Germany.	710	969
July 24	<i>Memorandum by an Official on the Staff of the Four Year Plan</i> Account by Wohlthat of his conversations in London, with Sir H. Wilson on July 18 and 21, with Sir J. Ball on July 20, and with Mr. R. S. Hudson on July 20.	716	977
July 25	<i>Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter enclosing a copy of document No. 710, and expressing the view that distorted press versions of Wohlthat-Hudson conversation may have advantage of keeping in background more important conversations between Wohlthat and Sir H. Wilson, thus affording possibility of continuing them.	723	1001

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
July 31	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Instructions to report immediately on political conversations Wohlthat held in London, and in particular on his conversation with Dirksen himself.	743	1022
July 31	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 743 and describes circumstances which led Wohlthat to have discussions with Hudson and Wilson. Reports on his own conversation with Wohlthat, in which the conclusions to be drawn from Wilson's statement were discussed.	746	1024
July 31	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Refers to document No. 743 and informs Ambassador that Wohlthat's report on his conversation with Sir H. Wilson has reached Ribbentrop through Göring. British appear to regard Wilson's suggestions as official feeler. Requests report about conversations and Dirksen's attitude to them.	748	1026
July 31	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses most suitable methods for enlightening British public opinion on German foreign policy and Danzig question; describes the Embassy's activities in this respect.	751	1028
Aug. 1	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 743 and gives his views on interpretation to be put on Wohlthat-Wilson conversation.	752	1033
Aug. 1	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> States that Wehrmacht attachés report scepticism in British military circles about the forthcoming military talks with U.S.S.R. Discusses probable British intentions in holding such talks.	753	1034
Aug. 3	<i>Editors' Note</i> Conversation between German Ambassador in London and Sir H. Wilson on August 3.		1062
Aug. 4	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with British Ambassador, who gave four reasons for his fear that war might arise, and spoke of possibility of achieving a political truce between Germany and Poland till following spring or summer.	769	1064
Aug. 4	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with British Ambassador who expects to be near Salzburg at end of August but hesitates to trouble Ribbentrop by calling on him.	770	1065
	<i>Editors' Note</i> Mission of the Swedish industrialist, Birger Dahlerus.		1088
Undated	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Review of public opinion in Britain given to Göring by a group of British industrialists at a meeting at Sönke Nissen Koog, arranged by Swedish industrialist, Dahlerus.  [See also under <i>France, Italy, Poland, Protectorate, Rumania and U.S.S.R.</i> ]	783	1088

## GREECE

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 19	<i>The Minister in Greece to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Greek State Secretary, who explained Greek attitude to Anglo-French guarantee.	231	287
May 4	<i>The Minister in Greece to the Foreign Ministry</i> Enquires about reported decision to grant an armaments credit to Greece and requests instructions.	323	418
June 20	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with Greek Minister on Greece's policy of strict neutrality and interpretation to be put upon the paragraph in Anglo-Turkish Declaration relating to the Balkans. Minister renewed assurances that Greece did not want to enter into any new commitments.	550	752

## HOLY SEE

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 18	<i>The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry</i> Suggests that, in view of the friendly attitude shown by the Vatican, the German press should continue to observe an attitude of restrained objectivity towards Vatican affairs.	28	29
Mar. 22	<i>The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned from good source that attempts to induce the Pope to associate himself with the protests of the democratic States against the annexation of Bohemia and Moravia have failed.	65	74
Apr. 21	<i>The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned that President Roosevelt's peace appeal has been severely criticized in Vatican circles.	240	300
Apr. 24	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Bergen</i> Letter requesting him to come to Berlin ostensibly on private visit, but in reality to discuss relations with the Vatican.	258	322
May 10	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Records a conversation between Hitler and the Papal Nuncio, who, on instructions from the Pope, put forward proposal for a conference of five European Great Powers to find a solution to the German-Polish and Franco-Italian problems. Hitler replied he must first consult Mussolini, and said he did not believe war imminent.	331	426
May 12	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Nuncio to whom, in the absence of Ribbentrop, he made a provisional reply to the Nuncio's <i>démarche</i> on the question of peace made to Hitler on May 5.	372	481
May 12	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Remarks by the Nuncio in addition to those recorded in document No. 372; Nuncio indicated that he would welcome another conversation with Hitler.	373	483

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 16	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Suggestions by the German Ambassador to the Holy See on the best methods of reaching a settlement with the Curia.	395	516
May 23	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Reception of the Apostolic Nuncio by Ribbentrop, who gave official German reply to the Pope's proposal.	396	519
June 9	<i>Ambassador Bergen to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Letter describing his audience with the Pope, at which he was able, as instructed, to put forward proposals for promoting a <i>détente</i> in German-Vatican relations.	502	690
July 6	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Nuncio who stated that suggestion previously made to him by Weizsäcker, that the clergy in Western Poland could contribute to easing situation, was being followed up in Rome, where it was hoped that Germany was also working for peace.	623	865

## HUNGARY

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 16	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports is informed by M.F.A. that Hungarian Army has been ordered to eject Rumanians should they attempt to invade the Carpatho-Ukraine, but, in return for concessions elsewhere, Hungary is prepared to cede certain areas to Rumania.	7	8
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Information from Hungarian Minister that his Government had not notified any other Government in advance of their intention to occupy the Carpatho-Ukraine, and about the Hungarian attitude to Rumanian claims.	39	41
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Hungarian Minister has presented a letter for Ribbentrop concerning Hungarian occupation of, and assumption of sovereignty over, the Carpatho-Ukraine, and stating that Hungary intends to negotiate direct with Rumania and Slovakia on frontier question.	53	62
Mar. 23	<i>Minute by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Note of telephone conversation in which Ribbentrop drew attention of Hungarian Minister to reports that the Hungarians had advanced into eastern Slovakia; the latter stated that only those areas had been occupied which Hungary claimed as frontier rectification against Slovakia.	76	89
Mar. 23	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Hungarian Minister has mentioned a request made by Ribbentrop that certain members of the Sic should not be denied transit rights through the Carpatho-Ukraine.	77	89
Mar. 24	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned from M.F.A. that latter intends to inform Rumanian Minister that if Rumania will state officially that she will commence demobilization, Hungary will immediately rescind measures adopted for the defence of Budapest.	82	99

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 25	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Encloses a letter from Horthy to Hitler taking note with thanks of the German statement relating to Slovakia and drawing attention to the need for a new frontier demarcation between Slovakia and the Ruthenian territory.	96	115
Mar. 25	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Enquiry by Hungarian Minister about rumours that the German Economic Treaty with Rumania had been linked with political concessions.	97	116
Mar. 29	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Hungary</i> States Germany does not intend to intervene in the Hungarian-Slovak frontier negotiations. Instructions to evade discussion of, and if necessary, to contradict, allegations that Hungary's invasion of Slovakia had Germany's approval.	120	149
Mar. 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Hungarian Minister who believed that rapid conclusion of German-Rumanian Economic Treaty was due to Hungarian military measures. Hungary no longer willing to cede a few villages in the Carpatho-Ukraine to Rumania.	122	151
Mar. 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Enquiry by Hungarian Minister about German-Polish conversations on Danzig; Minister hinted that Csáky would be willing to advise conciliatory attitude in Warsaw.	123	152
Mar. 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Hungary</i> Transmits report from Legation in Bucharest stating that Hungary demands recognition of her new frontiers with Rumania and proposes issuing declaration along lines of hitherto unsigned Bled declaration. Instructions about the German views on this proposal.	132	167
Apr. 2	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 132, and reports that Hungarian M.F.A. denies having demanded Rumanian recognition of the new frontiers, but has declared he is ready to negotiate after a complete Rumanian demobilization.	146	183
Apr. 6	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by Hungarian M.F.A. that latter has denied to Rumanian Minister British press reports about the return of parts of Rumanian territory to Hungary and about an imminent Hungarian attack on Rumania; Csáky likewise refused to put Bled Agreement into effect but offered to negotiate entirely fresh agreement.	165	202
Apr. 15	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by Hungarian M.F.A. that the reasons for détente in Hungarian-Rumanian relations is a Rumanian Note declaring that, in view of statements that Hungary intends to respect Rumanian frontier, Rumania will reduce mobilization.	204	247
Apr. 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Hungarian Minister has enquired about a possible German frontier guarantee for Rumania.	219	268

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 22	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports account given him by M.F.A. of latter's conversations with Mussolini and Ciano; Csáky emphasized that Hungary was prepared in principle to conclude a non-aggression pact and a treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia. Ciano intended to tell Yugoslav M.F.A. this, and to recommend Yugoslav accession to Anti-Comintern Pact.	248	307
Apr. 30	<i>Memorandum by the Minister in Hungary</i> Records the reception of the Hungarian Minister President and M.F.A. by Ribbentrop; latter's survey of the general political situation. Discussion of Hungarian-Rumanian and Hungarian-Yugoslav relations.	295	372
Apr. 29	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Conversation between Hitler and the Hungarian Minister President and M.F.A. on the general political situation.	296	376
May 1	<i>Memorandum by the Minister in Hungary</i> Records second conversation between Ribbentrop and Hungarian Minister President and M.F.A. Discussion of questions at issue between Germany, Hungary and Slovakia arising from the partition of Czecho-Slovakia; complaints of anti-Hungarian propaganda in Slovakia; grievances of minorities; Hungarian offer of mediation in German-Polish relations declined.	300	388
May 25	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews complaints by M.F.A. and other Hungarian politicians of German support given to the Hungarian Arrow Cross party, which is causing embarrassment to Hungarian Government.	436	585
June 10	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports M.F.A. has told him of a Yugoslav proposal for concluding an agreement between Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary, with subsequent Turkish adherence. Csáky, out of consideration for Axis Powers, will not entertain this proposal.	503	692
June 12	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Hungary</i> Refers to document No. 503 and requests that further enquiries be made into meaning and purpose of Yugoslav initiative for agreement between herself, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary, with Turkey as mediator.	510	707
June 13	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 510 and reports the result of enquiries made of Hungarian Deputy M.F.A.	519	715
June 18	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has carried out instructions to raise with M.F.A. question of Hungary attempting to use Turkish good offices in territorial dispute between Hungary and Rumania. Csáky explained reasons for this action.	542	745
June 28	<i>The Hungarian Minister in Germany to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter transmitting memorandum on proposals by Hungarian Government for tripartite talks between Germany, Italy and Hungary to concert measures in the field of war economy.	578	802

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
June 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Hungarian Minister who stated his Government intended to remonstrate with British Government about effect of British guarantee to Rumania on treatment of Hungarian minority in Rumania.	584	810
June 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Hungarian Minister has drawn attention to strengthening of Rumanian Army which would result if Rumanian orders for arms placed in Germany were fulfilled, and proposed some limitation on such supplies.	585	811
June 30	<i>Minute by an Official of Political Division I</i> Decision reached in conference with Keitel on Hungarian request to hold preparatory talks on war economy with the Axis Powers.	595	820
July 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> States Ribbentrop in favour of joint preparatory work for war economy with Hungary, but this should not start till after first meeting on this subject with the Italians.	641	888
July 22	<i>Memorandum by Ambassador Ritter</i> Conversation with Hungarian Minister about the Hungarian proposal contained in document No. 578.	706	963
July 24	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Hungarian Minister who presented two letters from his Minister President to the Führer. In the first letter Teleki states that, in event of general conflict, Hungary will make her policy conform to that of the Axis, and proposes tripartite discussions on war economy. In the second Teleki states that Hungary would not on moral grounds be in a position to take action against Poland.	712	972
Aug. 8	<i>Memorandum by the Minister in Hungary</i> Record of conversations between Hitler and Csáky in presence of Ribbentrop and others. Hitler's displeasure at letter from Count Teleki stating Hungary could not participate in German-Polish conflict; reasons for believing German success to be in Hungary's interests; determination to settle Polish question; views on attitude of other States in case of conflict. Promise subsequently made by Csáky to Ribbentrop to withdraw Teleki letters.  [See also under <i>Italy, Poland, Rumania, Slovakia, Turkey and Yugoslavia.</i> ]	784	1093

## ITALY

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 17	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Ciano, on Mussolini's instructions, confirmed Italy's approval of Germany's action in Czecho-Slovakia, but drew attention to rumours of Croat intentions to establish Croat autonomy under German protection; the Duce could not show the same <i>désintéressement</i> in the Croat question as over Czecho-Slovakia.	15	15

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has been told privately by Italian Ambassador of account the latter had received from Rome on the mission of Prince Philip of Hesse, and Mussolini's reply.	37	40
Mar. 18	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Italian Ambassador has enquired about documents, alleged by British press to exist, showing that Germany's march into Czecho-Slovakia was already settled several weeks in advance.	38	41
Mar. 19	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Further representations made by the Italian Ambassador regarding Germany's arrears of coal deliveries to Italy, and the political aspects of this question.	44	47
Mar. 20	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 15 and reports conversation with Ciano, to whom he gave assurances about the German attitude to the Croat question. Ciano stated that Italy desired continuance of present Yugoslav State, but should Croat autonomy movement develop, would expect complete <i>désintéressement</i> from Germany.	45	48
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Note on a conversation between Hitler and the Italian Ambassador, in Ribbentrop's presence. Hitler reviews the prospects for the Axis Powers in the event of a European war. Discussion of Italian claims against France.	52	57
Mar. 20	<i>Foreign Minister Ribbentrop to Foreign Minister Ciano</i> Letter expressing appreciation of Italy's attitude during recent events in Czecho-Slovakia and assuring him of Germany's <i>désintéressement</i> in Croat question.	55	63
Mar. 21	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> States that General Keitel has been asked to inform the Italian authorities that he is ready to open General Staff talks with them.	57	66
Mar. 21	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has made urgent representations to Reich Minister of Economics about the political importance of coal deliveries to Italy; Funk referred to Germany's own shortage.	62	73
Mar. 24	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy</i> Has had sent by special courier to Berlin two memoranda (attached) on the speech by Mussolini at the Fascist Grand Council on March 21, concerning Axis solidarity.	86	102
Mar. 24	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to Counsellor Erich Kordt</i> Letter referring to further instructions from Ribbentrop about the record of the Hitler-Attolico conversation (document No. 52) and transmitting a memorandum on his conversation with Attolico about this. According to Attolico Mussolini seemed much annoyed at being confronted with a <i>fait accompli</i> over Czecho-Slovakia, but had now accepted the course of events.	87	106



## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

XLIII

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 25	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> States that Germany's relations with Italy in the Axis require that Italian intentions should be decisive for German policy in respect of the Mediterranean countries, particularly in the case of policy towards minorities there. No connections must in future be maintained with Croat organizations.	94	113
Mar. 25	<i>The Führer and Chancellor to the Head of the Italian Government</i> Letter of congratulations on the 20th anniversary of the foundation of Fascism; assures Mussolini of Germany's unchanging friendship.	100	119
Mar. 26	<i>Editors' Note</i> Mussolini's speech on March 26, 1939, the 20th anniversary of the foundation of the Fascist Formations.		125
Mar. 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Enquiry by Italian Chargé d'Affaires about Bulgarian reactions to the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty.	110	137
Mar. 28	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports explanation given him by Ciano of statement by Mussolini in his speech on March 26 that he refused to take any kind of initiative. Reason was a personal letter to Mussolini from Chamberlain, begging the Duce to consider whether he could not take action to relieve present tension.	114	142
Mar. 31	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Italian Ambassador, who discussed German-Italian relations and complained that recent German treatment of Italy had been inconsiderate. He desired clearer definition of German-Italian interests.	140	174
Apr. 1	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has denied the Italian Ambassador's allegation that there must still be irregular connections between Germany and the South Tyrol through the Aussenpolitisches Amt.	143	179
Apr. 1	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has given Italian Ambassador a formal assurance about contacts between the Croats and German authorities.	144	180
Apr. 4	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that Italo-Albanian negotiations are in progress to establish Italian Protectorate over Albania. Has enquired of M.F.A., who gave an account of Italo-Albanian relations and Italian intentions.	150	187
Apr. 5	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Instructions to inform Italian M.F.A. with regard to Albanian question, that Germany welcomes any strengthening of Italian influence.	158	194
Apr. 5	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVa</i> Records discussion of South Tyrol questions with Magistrati, who put forward, as only possible solution to the problem, the resettlement of all South Tyrolese in Germany; Mussolini would agree to this plan if proposed to him by Hitler.	163	198

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 6	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has been informed by Italian Ambassador that Italian troops will land in Albania on April 7, and will occupy the country.	170	207
Apr. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 158, and reports has carried out instructions with M.F.A., who informed him of Italy's decision to land troops in Albania and reasons for this.	171	207
Apr. 7	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Italian Ambassador has made urgent appeal about German coal supplies to Italy.	174	210
Apr. 8	<i>The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in Italy</i> States that special efforts are being made to increase deliveries of coal to Italy.	175	211
Apr. 11	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Transmits message for Göring, stating that was unaware Göring was paying official state visit to Italy, and requesting him to inform German Ambassador in Rome of his programme.	178	214
Apr. 14	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has been informed by Italian Ambassador of conversation latter had had with Reich Foreign Minister. Attelico has since enquired of Ciano and been told that Mussolini attaches no importance to British guarantee to Greece.	197	238
Apr. 14	<i>SS-Gruppenführer Heydrich to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Letter transmitting report on the views expressed by important Italian personage regarding the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia, and German-Italian relations: position of Reich in Europe felt to be increasingly intolerable for Italy.	199	240
Apr. 15	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Informs Ambassador that the question of whether to ask Rumanian and Greek Governments if they were parties to British guarantee has been discussed with Attolico, who stated Mussolini considered such action inexpedient at present.	203	247
Apr. 15	<i>Unsigned Foreign Ministry Memorandum</i> Records conversation between Göring and Mussolini: German satisfaction over Italy's action in Albania; the situation in Yugoslavia; Germany to undertake no major economic activities in South East Europe without consulting Italy; economic and military advantages of dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia: strength of the military position of the Axis.	205	248
Apr. 15	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i> Letter informing him that Ciano has expressed wish for a meeting with Ribbentrop; discusses possible date for this.	208	256
Apr. 15	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i> Letter supplementing document No. 208; states Hitler-Mussolini meeting is in prospect and discusses value of such exchange of views.	209	257

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 18	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records conversation between Göring and Mussolini in Rome on April 16: discussion of Roosevelt message; Anglo-Italian relations; possibility of <i>rapprochement</i> with Russia and Japanese attitude thereto; Axis prospects in event of general conflict; significance of Tunisia and Malta; relations with Spain, Turkey, Egypt, the Arabs; economic questions. Conclusions reached in discussions.	211	258
Apr. 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records telephone conversation with German Ambassador in Rome who had learned from Ciano Italian intentions about reply to Roosevelt message.	216	267
Apr. 19	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has informed the Italian Ambassador that Hitler will probably include an answer to President Roosevelt in his speech on April 28. Attolico considered German and Italian replies should be in close accord.	236	296
Apr. 19	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter in reply to document No. 209: has no information about, but would welcome possibility of, a further meeting between Hitler and Mussolini.	237	296
Apr. 22	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter transmitting report on Göring's visit to Italy.	252	311
Apr. 24	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports a conversation with Ciano about the latter's recent meeting with the Yugoslav M.F.A., who had supported increasing <i>rapprochement</i> of Yugoslav foreign policy to that of Axis, but would not commit himself to definite date for joining Anti-Comintern Pact; Yugoslav withdrawal from League not to be expected at present.	256	318
Apr. 28	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Quotes report from Ambassador in Ankara describing his conversation with Turkish M.F.A. and recommending unequivocal statement by Mussolini to dispel Turkish distrust. Instructions to inform Ciano.	286	361
Apr. 29	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy</i> Instructions to induce the Italian Government to relinquish their claims to the crew of the Soviet ship <i>Kom-somol</i> , held prisoner in Spain, in favour of the German Government.	293	370
Apr. 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Italian Ambassador spoke of possibility of Italy exercising influence on Poland. Weizsäcker replied that this did not seem opportune at present.	297	380
May 1	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 286 and reports conversation with Ciano on Turkey's attitude and a possible declaration by Mussolini.	303	395
May 3	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 305 (see under <i>Turkey</i> ) and reports action taken. Ciano stated that he had solemnly declared to Turkish Minister that Italy was pursuing no designs which could endanger Turkey.	317	411

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 3	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports complaint by Ciano of statements attributed to the German Consul General in Milan about Hitler restoring the South Tyrol to the Reich.	318	411
	<i>Editors' Note</i> Two memoranda, apparently prepared as briefs for Ribbentrop's conversations with Ciano in Milan on May 6 and 7.		444
May 18	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Subjects discussed at Ribbentrop-Ciano meeting in Milan on May 6-7: decision to conclude a German-Italian alliance immediately; Anglo-Italian and Franco-Italian relations; Italy's relations with Spain and the Balkans; Axis policy towards Bulgaria and Turkey; Italian <i>désintéressement</i> in Polish question; political relations of the Axis Powers with U.S.S.R.; evacuation of former Austrians from the South Tyrol; German coal supplies to Italy; German relations with the Vatican.	341	450
May 10	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Sends details of German coal deliveries to Italy, from which it emerges that arrears amount to one million tons; describes unpleasant surprise created in Italy by repeated failure to maintain deliveries at agreed level.	360	470
May 12	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Ciano who enquired if he had any news from Berlin on the results of the meeting with Ribbentrop in Milan. Ciano stated points for forthcoming German-Italian Treaty to which he attached decisive importance.	369	478
May 12	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Italian Ambassador who was anxious to have the German draft of the forthcoming German-Italian treaty, as no draft had been drawn up in Rome.	370	479
May 12	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Has handed Italian Ambassador German draft for a German-Italian Pact. Ambassador raised two points: an historical mention of the Brenner frontier, and an agreement to respect each other's spheres of interest.	371	479
May 13	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Mussolini has caused him to be given text of a telegram dated May 11, which British Foreign Office sent to British Embassy in Rome, containing message sent to British Ambassador in Berlin. Transmits translation of this message.	377	487
May 15	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Records two amendments which, at Mussolini's request, Attolico has proposed for the German draft of the German-Italian Pact.	386	503
Undated	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Reviews present position of German-Italian economic negotiations and suggests replies to be made to Ciano, should he raise questions about fall in German supplies to Italy below agreed level.	423	557

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
May 22	<i>German-Italian Pact of Friendship and Alliance</i> Germany and Italy undertake to concert their foreign policies and render each other full political and diplomatic support in the event of a threat to the vital interests of either, with full military support in the event of hostilities with other Powers. Secret Protocol making provision for joint commissions for military questions and war economy.	426	561
May 23	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Notes statements made by Ciano during his Berlin visit on question of Yugoslavia's foreign policy and on Italy's relations with Turkey.	431	571
May 31	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits request from Ciano and Mussolini that, during visit of Yugoslav Prince Regent and M.F.A. to Berlin, latter should be pressed to state their policy towards Axis without ambiguity.	455	613
May 31	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Ciano, who gave detailed account of Mussolini's first reception of new British Ambassador.	456	613
May 31	<i>Count Ciano to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Letter introducing Count Cavallero, Under Secretary of State for War, and director of military and economic commissions to be set up under the Pact of Friendship and Alliance. Cavallero entrusted with memorandum prepared by Mussolini for Hitler. Memorandum rehearses reasons why present time would not be favourable for Italy to embark on war, and recommends strategy to be adopted by Axis Powers when inevitable war with Western Democracies comes about.	459	617
May 31	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i> Letter transmitting copy of document No. 451 (see under U.S.S.R.) in order to inform him of recent outcome of discussions in Berlin about how to put a spoke in the Anglo-Russian conversations; Attolico not yet acquainted with these developments.	460	621
June 8	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports Mussolini's views on his conversation with Serrano Suñer in Rome.	494	665
June 10	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 456, and reports Ciano has informed him of visit by British Ambassador, who brought memorandum containing British reply to Mussolini's question about British Government's attitude to Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 1938. Has been furnished with copy of memorandum and transmits summary.	505	694
June 10	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter describing conversation with Ciano who attributed to inadvertence failure by Serrano Suñer to mention in his speech Germany's share in Franco's victory. Ciano suggested that Suñer be invited to pay official visit to Germany.	506	695
June 14	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Mussolini and Ciano regarding a report from the Italian Ambassador in Moscow who had been informed by his German colleague of proposals the latter was making to Berlin. Mussolini approved these proposals.	523	721

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
June 14	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Continues document No. 523, and reports Mussolini's views on significance attaching to present visit to Berlin of Japanese Ambassador in Rome.	524	722
June 14	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Continues document No. 524 and reports Mussolini's account of his conversations with Serrano Suñer on Spain's relations with the Axis and on German relations with the Vatican.	525	723
June 14	<i>The State Secretary to the Ambassador in Italy</i> Encloses a copy of document No. 459 and Ribbentrop's reply, which is to be transmitted to Ciano. Reply welcomes arrival of Count Cavallero to further Italo-German military collaboration, and states that Hitler's views on Mussolini's memorandum have been transmitted through Attolico.	527	726
June 16	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter, referring to document No. 523, giving Mussolini's opinion of Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Rome and enclosing memorandum on confidential statements made by the latter as to Soviet view of present Anglo-Soviet negotiations: no concessions to be made in Europe without guarantee of Soviet interests against Japan; Moscow aware of Japanese decisions on alliance with Axis.	536	735
June 19	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has informed Italian Ambassador that Germany has no concrete aims as regards Spain beyond still unratified secret Treaty of Friendship.	545	749
June 19	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Italian Ambassador who recently transmitted to Rome German reply to Mussolini's letter to Hitler. Ambassador stated Mussolini welcomed Hitler's suggestion for meeting.	546	740
June 20	<i>The Head of the Auslandsorganisation to the Embassy in Italy</i> Instructions to all branches of the AO in Italy, especially in former South Tyrol, that no friction or differences with the Italians over South Tyrol question must be allowed to arise. Unqualified support must be given to view that renunciation is final.	549	751
June 23	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy</i> Records telephone conversation with State Secretary in Berlin on possibility of Maekensen intervening further in favour of Ortsgruppenleiter Kauffmann, who is charged with offence against Italian authorities in South Tyrol.	560	775
June 24	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in Italy</i> Gives decisions taken at a meeting between the Reichsführer-SS and Italian representatives on effecting transfer and resettlement of the South Tyrolese.	562	778
June 26	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep</i> Letter describing informal conversation with the Italian Ambassador, who had been informed that his Government believed moment had arrived for thwarting Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations. Since Rosso not clear how to proceed, awaiting return of German Ambassador to Moscow.	569	789

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
June 27	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i> Letter acknowledging document No. 536 and stating that position still not clear over resumption of German-Soviet economic negotiations, or over probable outcome of Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations.	574	799
July 1	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Italian Ambassador, who gave him a document from the Italian Consulate General in Danzig, setting out Professor Burckhardt's views on the deterioration of the situation in Danzig.	601	825
July 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official in the Office of the State Secretary</i> Records information from the Reichsführer-SS, that latter had submitted to Hitler a draft communiqué on the resettlement of Reich Germans from the South Tyrol. Hitler had forbidden publication, or any future press announcements on the subject without his permission.	624	866
July 7	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports account received from Ciano of conversation between Mussolini and British Ambassador, at which the latter presented an <i>aide-memoire</i> from Chamberlain warning Mussolini of the dangers inherent in the Danzig situation.	629	872
July 7	<i>Ambassador Attolico to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop</i> Letter requesting that further consideration be given to question of a communiqué stressing voluntary character of South Tyrol migration, as Italian Government desire.	631	878
July 8	<i>Minute by the Foreign Minister</i> Information given to Italian Ambassador as to German intentions respecting Danzig and Poland.	636	883
July 10	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy and the Consulate General at Milan</i> States that nothing will appear in German press about South Tyrol resettlement operations, and gives instructions on what may be said in conversations, where these are unavoidable.	643	889
July 11	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter sending copy of a letter from Mussolini to be delivered to Franco by Ciano; Mussolini warns of dangers of monarchical restoration in Spain and of unreliability of Britain and France.	654	902
July 12	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Mussolini's order expelling all foreigners from Province of Bolzano in South Tyrol, being applied to German Air Attaché. Is making representations to Italian Government.	655	903
July 12	<i>Ambassador Attolico to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter recalling German undertaking to supply Italy with anti-aircraft artillery, and asking that Italian request for early delivery of 50 batteries be dealt with.	660	909
July 13	<i>The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports arrival of Ciano in Spain, and latter's account of his conversation with Franco.	663	912

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
July 14	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in Italy and the Consulate General in Milan</i> Explains reasons for departing from policy previously agreed with Italians on publicity over South Tyrolese migration; distorted account in <i>Temps</i> required issue of denial through DNE.	668	917
July 24	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has been informed by the Italian Ambassador in confidence of certain basic principles which Mussolini will put forward when he meets Hitler on August 4.	711	971
July 24	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen</i> Letter enclosing copies of documents Nos. 578, 706 (see under <i>Hungary</i> ) and related correspondence, and stating that meeting of German and Italian commissions on military policy and war economy now postponed until possibly mid-August.	717	983
July 25	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Conversation between Ribbentrop and Italian Ambassador, who brought with him four memoranda containing Mussolini's views about projected Hitler-Mussolini meeting.	718	984
July 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Communication made by the Italian Ambassador, that repeated telephone conversations with Ciano had shown that Mussolini still favoured his idea of an international conference. Attolico believed there would be no Italian objection to postponing Hitler-Mussolini meeting, if German Government accepted principle of peaceful development.	737	1016
July 29	<i>Ambassador Attolico to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter giving Ciano's views concerning reply to the two letters from Count Teleki (document No. 712—see under <i>Hungary</i> ).	739	1018
Aug. 7	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Italian Ambassador, on Ciano's instructions, has stated that Mussolini feels meeting with Hitler might usefully be postponed until outcome of Anglo-Soviet negotiations known, but considers that Ciano and Ribbentrop should meet as soon as possible.  [See also under <i>Albania, Far East, Spain, Turkey and U.S.S.R.</i> ]	777	1073

## LATIN AMERICA

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 12	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Record of first meeting of conference on Latin America held at Foreign Ministry between Heads of German Missions and Party (AO) officials Discussion of division of spheres of responsibility between Reich Missions and Party (AO) organizations.	509	700



## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LI

## LIECHTENSTEIN

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Mar. 31	<i>The Head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on attempts to organize a <i>putsch</i> for forcible union of Liechtenstein with the Reich, and on action taken by Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to prevent international consequences.	141	176

## MIDDLE EAST

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Mar. 31	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Afghanistan</i> General instructions on the attitude to be adopted in social relations with members of the Soviet Russian Mission.	138	173
May 2	<i>Minister Grobba to Under State Secretary Woermann</i> Letter again raising the question of German lack of interest in establishing closer ties with King Ibn Saud, and giving reasons for requesting that this attitude be reconsidered.	313	403
May 22	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII</i> Reviews German policy towards Saudi Arabia, and recommends receiving a special envoy from King Ibn Saud and granting King's request for economic cooperation.	422	555
June 20	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII</i> Conversation between Ribbentrop and King Ibn Saud's special emissary, Khalid Al Hud, in which latter expressed King's desire to enter into relations with Germany and obtain German assistance in building up armed forces independently of Britain.	498	685
June 20	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII</i> Records reception of King Ibn Saud's special envoy by Hitler: conversation on German-Arab relations. German economic assistance for purchase of arms to be given after receipt of Italian views.	541	743

## MILITARY DIRECTIVES

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939 Mar. 25	<i>Directive from the Führer to the Commander in Chief of the Army on March 25, 1939</i> Policy concerning Danzig, Poland, the Slovak question, the Czech Protectorate and the Balkans.	99	117
Apr. 3	<i>Directive by the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht</i> Instructions for "Operation White" (attack on Poland): preparations should be made so that the operation can be put into action by September 1; OKW to prepare precise timetable and synchronize timing between the three branches of the Wehrmacht.	149	186
Apr. 11	<i>Directive by the Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht</i> The Wehrmacht to be prepared for "Operation White" (attack on Poland) and possible surprise occupation of Danzig independently of "Operation White".	185	223

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939 May 23	<i>Minutes of a Conference on May 23, 1939</i> Hitler's review, at a conference with senior officers of the Wehrmacht, of the present situation in foreign policy and the conclusions to be drawn from it.	433	574

## NETHERLANDS

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939 Mar. 25	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that the Secretary General of the Netherlands Foreign Ministry has denied any knowledge other than press reports of a Franco-British agreement to defend the Netherlands frontier in the event of a German attack and has stated that the Netherlands would never accede to such agreements but would defend their neutrality in the event of war.	93	112
Mar. 29	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed Krupps have refused delivery of war material to the Netherlands Army. Requests that Krupps be prevailed upon to fulfil this order.	119	148
Apr. 5	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been told by Netherlands M.F.A. that latter does not believe that an Anglo-French agreement on mutual assistance in the event of an attack on the Netherlands has been concluded.	162	197
Apr. 13	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Has been informed by Netherlands Military Attaché that Netherlands still attach importance to placing orders for field howitzers with Germany, but require these by specified date.	193	235
Apr. 22	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop</i> Reports visit from Mussert, the leader of the Dutch National Socialist Party, who expressed his views on the European political situation for communication to Ribbentrop.	249	308
Apr. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Conversation with Netherlands Minister with whom Ribbentrop raised question of rumours of German intentions against Netherlands and of military measures taken by the latter. Minister gave assurance of Netherlands' strict neutrality. Gave Minister assurance of German respect for Netherlands' neutrality in peace and war.	263	330
May 6	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. who quoted statements attributed to the Chief of OKW that recent Netherlands mobilization measures were primarily directed against Germany. M.F.A. denied this and denied any military connections whatever with Britain, but repeated assurances of Netherlands' neutrality.	338	440

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIII

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Refers to negotiations between Krupps and Netherlands Government regarding supply of howitzers, and states Netherlands Government request formal German assurance that contract will not be interrupted in the event of outbreak of war. Views of competent German authorities being obtained.	Addendum 1103 No. (a)	
July 12	<i>Minute by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> States that Krupps have obtained contract from Netherlands Government for supply of howitzers. Wehrmacht has approved.  [See also under <i>Belgium</i> .]	Addendum 1103 No. (b)	

## NORTHERN STATES

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 29	<i>Minister Blücher to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter recommending early reply to Finno-Swedish Note on Aaland Islands, since continued non-arrival of a German reply places Finnish M.F.A. at a disadvantage, which is not in Germany's interests.	127	156
[Undated]	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Reviews position under the Aaland Islands Convention of 1921 and the Finnish and Swedish Notes of January, 1939, concerning alterations to the Convention; Germany's attitude to a partial fortification of the islands.	145	180
Apr. 12	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has informed Swedish Minister of German attitude to Finno-Swedish proposals on the Aaland Islands and has suggested a declaration by the Swedish Government to the German Government that, in the event of war, Sweden would ensure that normal exports to Germany would suffer no prejudice.	187	229
Apr. 17	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports views of Finnish M.F.A. on German-Swedish negotiations on Aaland Islands question.	212	263
Apr. 18	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Records that Swedish Minister has communicated orally reply of his Government to German request, made on April 12, for official Swedish statement, and has given <i>exposé</i> of Sweden's attitude to the Aaland Islands question and of her foreign trade policy in the event of war.	229	284
Apr. 19	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Finland</i> Refers to document No. 212 and describes unsatisfactory results of the German-Swedish conversations; Finnish Minister has been similarly informed and told that Germany has no objection to the fortification of Aaland Islands by Finland.	232	288
Apr. 21	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Has replied to Swedish Minister's statement on Aaland Islands, made on April 18, by expressing disappointment. Has suggested to Swedish Minister new formula for Swedish statement on neutrality and the conduct of commercial relations in the event of war.	242	302

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 25	<i>Minister Renthe-Fink to Senior Counsellor Gruntherr</i> Letter enclosing a report from the Consulate in Aabenraa dealing with the recruiting of an SS Company from young <i>Volksdeutsche</i> in North Schleswig; asks what is the official view of this matter.	265	333
Apr. 28	<i>The State Secretary to the Legations in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland</i> In connection with Hitler's speech, the Ministers of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Latvia, Finland and Estonia are being informed by Ribbentrop that Germany is prepared in principle to conclude non-aggression treaties with their Governments.	284	359
May 2	<i>Foreign Minister Ribbentrop to the Finnish Minister in Berlin</i> Note accepting the Finno-Swedish proposals for the amendment of the Aaland Islands Convention of 1921.	312	402
May 3	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that M.F.A. has expressed his Government's satisfaction over German Note (document No. 312) and that his Government agree in principle to a non-aggression pact with Germany, although possible repercussions on Finnish policy of neutrality are being studied.	314	408
May 3	<i>The State Secretary to the Legations in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Latvia and Estonia</i> Refers to document No. 284 and transmits text of draft treaty handed to Estonian Minister.	316	410
May 5	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> The Finnish Counsellor has given the Finnish Government's views on the German offer of a non-aggression pact; this question being considered in relation to Finnish neutrality. Has given Counsellor informally German draft for such a treaty.	330	425
May 10	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Swedish Minister, whose attention he drew to the fact that the Swedish Government had still not replied to Germany's offer of a non-aggression pact, and whom he asked what attitude Swedish Government meant to adopt.	356	466
May 10	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Danish Minister, who personally expected to receive shortly his Government's assent, in principle, to projected German-Danish non-aggression pact. German draft to be transmitted as soon as such assent received.	357	467
May 10	<i>The Minister in Denmark to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned that M.F.A. is disappointed at results of Stockholm conversations, where opposition to proposed non-aggression pacts with Germany, led by Swedish M.F.A. proved unexpectedly strong. Denmark now faced with question whether to accept German offer by herself.	358	468
May 11	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Norway</i> Refers to report from confidential source that British Minister in Oslo enquired of M.F.A. what the reply would be, if, in the event of war, Germany should demand a base in Norway. Recommends warning Norwegian M.F.A. against British incitements.	364	474

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LV

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 11	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> Telephone instructions given to Legations in Denmark and Finland concerning replies to be made to objections raised by Swedish M.F.A. to proposed non-aggression pacts (document No. 358).	365	475
May 11	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI</i> Record of telephone conversation with Minister in Copenhagen, who reported action taken on instructions in document No. 365, and views of Danish Government.	366	476
May 16	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Finnish Minister, who read out an oral reply from his Government declining the German offer of a non-aggression pact.	391	513
May 16	<i>Note by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department</i> Discussion with two officials of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle on the question of recruiting SS-men from the German minority in North Schleswig and Estonia.	393	515
May 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Danish Minister who brought his Government's reply to the German offer of a non-aggression pact and a communiqué to be published in Copenhagen on May 19.	404	533
May 18	<i>The State Secretary to the Legations in Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland</i> Informs them of the replies from the Governments of the four Northern States to Germany's offer of non-aggression pacts.	407	537
May 20	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop</i> Reports statements said to have been made to a journalist by the Danish Minister in Berlin that, at the Stockholm Conference, main opposition to acceptance by Northern States of Germany's offer of non-aggression pacts came from Swedish M.F.A.	411	542
May 22	<i>The Minister in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned from King of Sweden that difficulties have arisen in Geneva over Aaland Islands question, owing to a change in Soviet policy. Swedo-Soviet negotiations to take place.	419	552
May 20	<i>Senior Counsellor Grundherr to Minister Renthe-Fink</i> Letter describing a conference with representatives of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, and Möller, a leader of the German minority in Denmark, on the policy to be followed by Möller. Moderation urged on him.	432	571
May 24	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports Finnish reaction to latest Soviet proposal to Britain to include Finland among the countries to be guaranteed and to Soviet desire to become a guarantor of the Aaland Islands.	434	581
May 27	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Finnish representative in Geneva has been instructed to try to ensure that, in Aaland Islands question, League confines itself to taking note of consent of signatory Powers and of any Russian protest.	443	593

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
May 31	<i>German-Danish Treaty of Non-Aggression</i> Germany and Denmark undertake not to go to war or resort to force against each other, not to lend support to a third party taking such action against either State. Protocol of Signature defining terms in relation to commercial policy.	461	621
June 15	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from M.F.A. about Russian insistence on being informed about Aaland Islands fortifications, and about an assurance from Britain that she would not conclude an Anglo-Soviet agreement guaranteeing Finland.	528	727
July 1	<i>Minister Renthe-Fink to Senior Counsellor Grundherr</i> Letter drawing attention to a speech by a leader of the German national group in Denmark, which contained undesirable references to frontier question and to Hitler's future plans.	600	825
July 4	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legations in Finland and Sweden</i> Transmits information obtained by German Ambassador in Moscow from his Finnish colleague that the Soviet Government claim equal rights with Sweden respecting Aaland Islands. Instructions to inform Finnish (Swedish) Government that Germany expects rejection of this claim.	612	841
July 7	<i>The Acting Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Informs of instructions sent Helsinki and Stockholm in document No. 612, and of reply from Helsinki that Finnish M.F.A. refused Molotov's demand over Aaland Islands.	626	867
July 11	<i>Counsellor Hensel to Senior Counsellor Grundherr</i> Letter referring to document No. 600; does not consider Möller's explanation of his speech satisfactory.	653	901
July 26	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports M.F.A. has spoken to him about German-Russian talks, repeating rumour that Germany intends to concede Baltic States to Russia as a sphere of interest. Requests instructions.	724	1002
July 27	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Finland</i> Refers to document No. 724 and states that this rumour is a malicious invention; German-Russian talks are confined to the attempt to steer economic relations into more normal channels.  [See also under <i>Baltic States and Europe: General.</i> ]	726	1003

## POLAND AND DANZIG

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 16	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. who complained about incidents on the Polish frontier during the German march into Czecho-Slovakia and failure to observe demarcation line. Presented notification of the Hácha agreement. Beck expressed satisfaction at Slovakia obtaining independence.	4	5

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 17	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that M.F.A. desires information on significance of Germany's promise of protection to Slovakia. As the announcement has caused considerable nervousness in Poland, recommends that Beck be given information calculated to allay fears of infringement of Slovak independence and of military pressure on Poland from Slovakia.	12	12
Mar. 18	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland</i> Refers to document No. 12 and states that import of the promise of protection for Slovakia has not yet been settled, but measures will not be so far-reaching as in the case of Czechia.	18	19
Mar. 21	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador in Berlin, to whom he explained reasons for Germany's action in Czecho-Slovakia; stated that Protectorate over Slovakia was not directed against Poland, and hinted that question might later be made subject of German-Polish discussions; drew Ambassador's attention to anti-German activities in Poland; suggested that Polish M.F.A. should visit Berlin; put forward proposals for German-Polish settlement, on basis of return of Danzig to Reich, extra-territorial communications between East Prussia and Reich and in return German guarantee for Corridor. Asked Lipski to report personally to his Government.	61	70
Mar. 21	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Wühlisch to Senior Counsellor of Legation Schliep</i> Letter commenting on unfavourable influence of American Ambassador in Warsaw; suggests tapping latter's telephone conversations.	64	74
Mar. [undated]	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Poland</i> Draft telegram, cancelled on Hitler's orders, of instructions to Ambassador to seek immediate interview with M.F.A. and put before him German attitude to German-Polish relations; points to be specially emphasized: settlement of Danzig question, a German <i>quid pro quo</i> for Danzig, and future attitude to Slovakia.	73	85
Mar. 23	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on conversation between President of the Danzig Senate Greiser and Polish Diplomatic Representative Chodacki on elections for Danzig Diet and Senate's proposal to issue ordinance prolonging term of Diet.	74	87
Mar. 24	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 58 (see under <i>Europe: General</i> ) and reports that he has established that the British <i>démarche</i> involved two separate moves. Regarding the <i>démarche</i> about the threat to Rumania, Arciszewski has remarked that Poland would fight only in defence of her own interests. Has learned nothing definite about the other British suggestions, but assumes Poland would be reluctant to join any combination, unless it increased her security in the event of a German attack.	79	96
Mar. 24	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V</i> Records telephone message from the Consul General in Danzig on defensive measures taken by Poland in the northern part of the Corridor.	85	101

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 24	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Molke</i> Letter explaining circumstances which led to Ambassador being asked to cancel arrangement for conversation with Beck.	88	109
Mar. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Political Department</i> Information from Canaris about Polish military measures in the North and the views of General Keitel on Polish intentions.	90	110
Mar. 26	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador on memorandum presented by the latter, setting forth the views of the Polish Government on the German proposals respecting the question of transit traffic between the German Reich and East Prussia across the Polish Corridor, and about the future of the Free City of Danzig.	101	121
Mar. 27	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland</i> Transmits an account of Ribbentrop's interview with the Polish Ambassador (see document No. 101).	103	127
Mar. 27	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Records conversation between Ribbentrop and Polish Ambassador. Ribbentrop accused Polish authorities of condoning anti-German incidents and complained that the Polish Government had given an evasive answer to the generous German proposals.	108	135
Mar. 28	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Describes the reaction of Polish public opinion to the re-incorporation of Memel in the Reich. Belief prevalent that Danzig question may become acute at any moment. Military measures taken by the Government have aggravated the existing war psychosis.	115	144
Mar. 29	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been summoned by M.F.A., who stated that, in view of Ribbentrop's statement to Polish Ambassador in Berlin on March 26 (document No. 101) that a Polish coup against Danzig would constitute <i>casus belli</i> for Germany, he, Beck, was compelled to state that a German attempt to alter status of Danzig would constitute <i>casus belli</i> for Poland.	118	147
Mar. 29	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records questions put by the President of the Danzig Senate and Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher on Danzig's future attitude to Poland and to the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, and the advice given them.	124	152
Mar. 29	<i>The Minister of the Interior to the Head of the Reich Chancellery</i> Reviews German-Polish negotiations on questions concerning national groups, and concludes that, in view of Polish attitude, no constructive results could be achieved in these discussions.	125	153
Mar. 29	<i>Senior Counsellor Schliep to Ambassador Molke</i> Letter informing him of the advice regarding the attitude Danzig should adopt to Poland given to President of Danzig Senate by Weizsäcker and Ribbentrop.	126	155



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 3	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Protocol Department</i> Describes interview with Polish M.F.A. who was passing through Berlin.	148	185
Apr. 4	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews the attitude of Polish press and public opinion after Chamberlain's declaration on British assistance to Poland.	154	190
Apr. 4	<i>The Consul in Gdynia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Assesses attitude of Polish population in his district to an incorporation of the Corridor in the Reich.	155	192
Apr. 5	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland</i> States that Lipski will be told that German offer to Poland will not be repeated, and that Polish counter proposal has been rejected. The Embassy should refrain from discussing the matter.	159	195
Apr. 6	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports remarks made by Polish M.F.A.'s <i>Chef de Cabinet</i> , who said that Polish Government still desire a genuine understanding with Germany.	167	203
Apr. 6	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Polish Ambassador on Beck's visit to London. Lipski stated that Poland wished to abide by 1934 Agreement, and that Anglo-Polish Agreements were bilateral and purely defensive.	169	205
Apr. 11	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I</i> Reports assessment by the Intelligence Department of OKW of the present military situation in Poland.	184	223
Apr. 18	<i>The Embassy in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports statements said to have been made by Beck to foreign diplomats in Warsaw about the Anglo-Polish declaration of guarantee and his London visit.	225	274
Apr. 22	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland</i> Instructions to maintain complete reserve in conversations on the general political situation and on German-Polish relations.	247	306
Apr. 25	<i>The Embassy in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews public opinion in Poland; fear of Germany has consolidated the various political elements, and the Army's political influence has been strengthened.	261	324
Apr. 27	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland</i> Instructs <i>Chargé d'Affaires</i> to arrange for interview at Foreign Ministry on April 28 to deliver a memorandum, at a time to coincide with start of Hitler's speech.	274	346
Apr. 27	<i>Note to the Polish Government</i> The German Government consider that, by entering into treaty relations with Britain, Poland has unilaterally nullified the German-Polish Declaration of 1934 and has rejected the German proposals for a Danzig settlement.	276	347

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 5	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Polish Chargé d'Affaires has presented a memorandum containing the Polish Government's reply to the German Memorandum of April 28 (document No. 276). Polish reply rejects German accusations regarding incompatibility of Anglo-Polish Mutual Guarantee with the 1934 Declaration, but states that nevertheless the Polish Government would be willing to entertain suggestions for regulating Polish-German relations on a good neighbourly basis by means of a treaty.	334	430
May 6	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Instructions to German Missions on the line to be taken on Beck's speech of May 5 and on the Polish Memorandum (document No. 334).	335	436
May 9	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the President of the Reich Labour and Unemployment Insurance Institute and the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police</i> Enquiries whether there are any objections, on economic or other grounds, to retaliatory measures against Poles in the Reich, in view of growing oppression of German community in Poland.	350	459
May 10	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews effect on Polish public opinion of Beck's speech on May 5, and discusses certain economic developments, which might in time affect Polish morale. Influence of recent events in Moscow on Polish attitude.	355	465
May 10	<i>Counsellor Bergmann to Consul General Janson</i> Letter giving State Secretary's views, expressed to President of Danzig Senate, that it would not be proper to influence League High Commissioner, Professor Burckhardt, over his return to Danzig, and stating present position over visit of German warships to Danzig.	361	471
May 11	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to increasing oppression of German community in Poland and to the attitude of the Polish Government, from which can be concluded that they are neither able nor willing to prevent it. Sends Missions reports of excesses for appropriate use.	367	476
May 13	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Consulate General in Danzig</i> States that German cruiser <i>Königsberg</i> will visit Danzig in August, and requests that Danzig Senate be informed. Instructions have been given to Warsaw Embassy to announce visit formally to Polish Government.	378	488
May 15	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Submits two memoranda on the question of taking reprisals against the Polish minority in Germany for oppression of the German minority in Poland. First memorandum deals with general questions; second with possible economic reprisals.	387	504
May 16	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from a reliable source about Potemkin's visit to Warsaw.	389	509

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 16	<i>Ambassador Moltke to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter deprecating the activities of the Japanese Ambassador in Warsaw in concerning himself with the improvement of German-Polish relations.	394	515
May 17	<i>The Consul General at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports views expressed by the League High Commissioner, who did not expect a formal meeting of the Committee of Three in view of Polish desire that Danzig questions be not now discussed by the Committee.	397	520
May 17	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has caused serious representations to be made to the Polish Foreign Ministry about incidents in Tomaszow; Polish authorities consider they have done everything possible to prevent recurrence of such incidents.	402	525
May 17	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Comments on information from the German Consul in Lwów on the attitude of the Ukrainians in Poland and recommends that the Consul make no official statements in support of the autonomy movement, but only personal expressions of goodwill.	405	534
May 21	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V</i> Gives an account of an incident at Kalthof, on the Danzig-Polish frontier; of Note of protest sent by President of Danzig Senate and of conversation between the latter and Polish Diplomatic Representative Chodacki.	417	549
May 21	<i>The Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig to the President of the Danzig Senate</i> Note describing the Kalthof incident, and complaining of lack of security for Polish officials.	418	550
May 23	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews various indirect efforts made by the Poles to resume conversations with Germany and suggestions made by Japanese Ambassador in Warsaw for Italian mediation.	429	566
June 1	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with League High Commissioner in Danzig, following latter's conversation with Ribbentrop. Professor Burekhardt's impressions from his recent talks with Beck and Halifax.	464	626
June 3	<i>The President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig</i> Note stating that, having received no satisfactory reply to various communications complaining of frontier incidents and conduct of Polish officials, he has ordered Danzig officials serving under Senate to break off contact with Polish persons concerned in Kalthof incident.	470	630
June 3	<i>The President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig</i> Note protesting against increase in, and conduct of, Polish Customs officials in Danzig. Danzig officials instructed to accept no instructions from Polish officials. Previous undertaking to abstain from administering oath of loyalty to National Socialist leadership to Danzig Customs officials now withdrawn.	471	631

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
June 7	<i>Staatsrat Böttcher to Consul General Janson</i> Transmits minute on a conversation between President of Danzig Senate and League High Commissioner, in which latter described his recent conversations in Berlin with Weizsäcker and Ribbentrop and gave his own views on situation.	492	663
June 12	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Summarizes and reports on Polish Note of June 10 in reply to Danzig Note of June 3 (document No. 471), which refused to permit any restrictions on the rights and numbers of the Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig.	515	712
June 19	<i>The High Command of the Army to the Foreign Ministry</i> States that certain officers have been granted permission to travel through the Danzig Free State in civilian clothes.	547	750
June 21	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division I</i> Arrangements for a visit to Danzig in June by a German naval contingent and for a visit in August by German cruiser <i>Königsberg</i> for commemoration ceremony; proposed plans for a visit this year by a German naval squadron await a decision by Hitler.	555	763
June 22	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I</i> Gives information obtained from the High Command of the Navy as to action so far taken about a German naval visit to Danzig and Hitler's instructions.	558	773
June 29	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in Poland</i> Instructions to report on whether formal announcement has been made to Polish Government of visit to Danzig by German cruiser <i>Königsberg</i> .	580	807
July 1	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on reaction of Government and press to events in Danzig, notably formation of a volunteer defence corps and arrival of guns from East Prussia.	599	824
July 6	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews attitude of Government and public to events in Danzig; Government unlikely to adopt aggressive tactics; general determination to fight if Poland's rights in Danzig clearly violated.	622	864
July 8	<i>The Office of the Wehrmacht Adjutants attached to the Führer and Chancellor to the High Command of the Navy and the Foreign Ministry</i> States that Führer has decided manner of announcing German naval visit to Danzig and will later decide what ships shall take part.	635	883
July 10	<i>Minute by the Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Danzig Senate</i> Conversations with League High Commissioner on latter's return to Danzig. Professor Burckhardt's views on political situation.	647	893
July 11	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to sentence passed on a Danzig Customs official by Polish authorities and possibility of arranging for an exchange against a Polish Customs Inspector about to be prosecuted by the Danzig authorities.	652	900

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
July 14	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> In reply to enquiry from Keitel about political advisability of publicly displaying certain guns now in Danzig, OKW is to be informed that it would be expedient to wait a little longer before parading guns.	670	920
July 17	<i>Minute by the Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Danzig Senate</i> Conversation between President of Danzig Senate and League High Commissioner; latter had been informed by Gauleiter Forster that the Gauleiter was now sole ruler in Danzig and was seeing Hitler to obtain approval of conversation with Polish representative Chodacki.	681	931
July 18	<i>Memorandum by the President of the Danzig Senate</i> Describes informal conversations with Smogorzewski, Berlin representative of <i>Gazeta Polska</i> , and with Polish Diplomatic Representative, Chodacki, on Danzig situation.	686	939
July 19	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> States has submitted to Ribbentrop view that a decision on proposed naval visit to Danzig concerns the Foreign Minister and that latter should submit matter to Führer before July 22.	687	941
July 20	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Danzig Senate</i> Conversation with League High Commissioner, who described a recent conversation with Gauleiter Forster, in which latter had told Professor Burekhardt that Germany would not relinquish her demands over Danzig, but that developments could still wait for another year or two.	693	950
July 22	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 515 and reports about Polish Note of July 19 to Danzig Senate which complains of Polish Customs Inspectors being obstructed in the performance of their duties and requires statement from Senate that conditions for Polish officials to perform their duties freely will be guaranteed. Note further announces economic counter measures in form of withdrawal of Polish Customs control from Danzig margarine factory "Amada-Unida" from August 1.	702	957
July 22	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I</i> Records information from the High Command of the Navy as to Führer's decisions in respect of German naval visit to Danzig and points still outstanding.	705	962
July 25	<i>Minute by the President of the Danzig Senate</i> Describes conduct of Gauleiter Forster, who had informed League High Commissioner that Poles were setting up an armed railway guard and told Professor Burekhardt he should protest to Polish authorities. Deplores Gauleiter's incorrect handling of this affair and failure to refer to proper Danzig authorities.	721	995
July 31	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that two Danzig Notes sent in reply to Polish Notes of June 10 and July 19. First Danzig Note lists cases of espionage by Polish Customs officials and rebuts Polish contention as to number of officials. Second Danzig Note declares Polish threat to withdraw customs supervision from Danzig Amada factory to be inadmissible <i>action directe</i> .	749	1026

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Aug. 1	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews state of Poland's moral and material powers of resistance, on the basis of reports received from the various German Consulates there. Concludes that previous report from Poznań Consulate about decline in Polish morale is not confirmed by other evidence.	754	1035
Aug. 3	<i>The Consul at Lwów to the Foreign Ministry</i> Describes feelings amongst Ukrainians in Poland since German-Polish tension and discusses their probable attitude should war come.	763	1053
Aug. 3	<i>The Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig to the President of the Danzig Senate</i> Note complaining of tone of Danzig Note of July 29 and rebutting charges and claims made therein in respect of Polish Customs Inspectors. Offer to conduct direct conversations to settle existing problems as soon as situation has returned to normal in respect of activities of Danzig Customs Board and Polish Inspectors.	765	1056
Aug. 4	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V</i> Consul General in Danzig has telephoned information from League High Commissioner about statements and requests made by Gauleiter Forster. Action taken by Professor Burekhardt with Polish Diplomatic Representative.	771	1066
Aug. 5	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports reactions of Polish press and Government to latest phase in controversy over Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig. Believes British Ambassador to have enquired as to point beyond which Poland could not go.	773	1068
Aug. 5	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V</i> Information telephoned by Vice-Consul, Danzig, concerning new Polish Note. Text of Note of August 4 attached; this states that certain local Danzig Customs authorities have announced intention of resisting Polish Customs Inspectors in performance of their duties. Note insists on cancellation of any such instructions and warns of Polish counter measures should such obstruction take place.	774	1070
Aug. 7	<i>The President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig</i> Note denying contention in Polish Note of August 4 (document No. 774), and protesting at Polish threat of reprisals.	780	1077
Aug. 8	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V</i> Information from President of Danzig Senate, that Gauleiter Forster was having conversations with Hitler at Obersalzberg; Polish Government believed to have decided not to send further Note in reply to last Danzig Note.  [See also under France, Great Britain and Italy.]	785	1100

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LXV

## PROTECTORATE

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 16	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Instructions given to German Legation in Prague that Weizsäcker suggests Chvalkovský instruct Czech Missions abroad to notify to Governments cessation of their functions as Czech representatives, and to ensure smooth transfer of their Missions to German diplomatic representatives.	5	7
Mar. 26	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in the Protectorate</i> States that as certain former Czecho-Slovak Missions are resisting instructions to transfer their affairs to German representatives, counter measures must be taken. Instructions to inform Chvalkovský of what general measures the Prague Government should now take.	102	125
Mar. 27	<i>The Legation in the Protectorate to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 102 and reports on disciplinary measures so far taken.	106	129
July 18	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Reviews position about granting the British, French and U.S. Governments <i>exequatur</i> for Consul General in Prague whilst these Governments still do not recognize the Protectorate.	684	935

## RUMANIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 15	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports M.F.A. has told him that Rumania would respect the situation created by the Vienna Award but was prepared to participate in a possible reorganization as regards the Carpatho-Ukraine though was disinterested in Czechia and Slovakia. Rumania would not tolerate occupation by Hungary of Rumanian villages and railway lines in the Carpatho-Ukraine.	2	4
Mar. 16	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 2 and reports that Rumanian Government have declined to follow, without German approval, Poland's advice to occupy Rumanian villages and railroads in the Carpatho-Ukraine, but do not wish their claims overlooked should the Carpatho-Ukraine position be revised owing to the Hungarian advance.	6	7
Mar. 16	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 2 and states that Rumanian Government should be informed that the terms of the Munich and Vienna agreements are now superseded. Germany has not seen fit to protest against Hungarian advance.	8	9
Mar. 17	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 6 and transmits text of document No. 7 (see under Hungary) with instructions to inform M.F.A. that although Germany is interested in a peaceful settlement of the Carpatho-Ukraine question, she does not at present intend to mediate, as she believes that direct settlement between Rumania and Hungary is feasible.	13	13

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 18	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 13 and reports that M.F.A. stated Rumania had no intention of marching into the Carpatho-Ukraine but hoped to obtain certain areas by diplomatic means. Recommends that Hungary should agree to cede them.	29	30
Mar. 18	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Crown Council have approved M.F.A.'s policy on not invading the Carpatho-Ukraine and the proposed economic (Wohlthat) agreement with Germany. Gafencu has denied reports of German economic pressure on Rumania but fears consequences of Italian aims and German colonial demands.	30	31
Mar. 18	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports request from M.F.A. for release of war material from a Czech firm, destined for Rumania, and held up by Germany on the Polish frontier.	31	32
Mar. 20	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to documents Nos. 29 and 30 and states that Germany still declines to act as intermediary in Hungarian-Rumanian relations; reports of German aggressive intentions towards Rumania to be denied.	47	50
Mar. 22	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Instructions to enquire of Rumanian Government the reason for certain military measures.	68	76
Mar. 23	<i>German-Rumanian Economic Treaty</i> Treaty for the promotion of economic relations between Germany and Rumania, with Confidential Protocol of Signature.	78	91
Mar. 24	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has been informed by M.F.A. of the attitude of the Rumanian Minister in London, and of latter's recall. Gafencu complained of pressure on Rumania not to conclude economic agreement with Germany and stated that he had caused the King to deny to British Minister in Bucharest allegations of an economic ultimatum from Germany.	80	97
Mar. 25	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Rumanian Government wish to propose that the Hungarian troops be withdrawn from frontier, whereupon both countries should demobilize.	91	111
Mar. 25	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 58 (see under <i>Europe: General</i> ) and reports that Rumanian M.F.A. has asserted that no British <i>démarche</i> has been made to Rumania for an association of peaceful Powers.	92	112
Mar. 30	<i>Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter transmitting report on his negotiations in Bucharest, which resulted in the signature of the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty.	131	160
Mar. 31	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that M.F.A. intends, in the Hungarian-Rumanian conversations being conducted in Budapest, to try to obtain from Hungary a mutual declaration of non-aggression, to be agreed upon with Yugoslavia also. Has expressed his doubts to Gafencu as to this course.	135	170



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 4	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Rumanian Air Ministry has placed orders for aircraft and wishes to appoint commissions to handle orders under Economic Treaty.	152	189
Apr. 4	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports is informed by Rumanian M.F.A. that Rumania will begin demobilization although Hungary refuses to make declaration concerning the frontier or non-aggression. Gafencu has affirmed his opposition to encirclement policy and his intentions of extending politico-economic relations with Germany.	153	189
Apr. 7	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Rumanian M.F.A. has told him of information received from Beck about the latter's new attitude to the mutual assistance pact with Britain. Gafencu stated that Rumania's attitude remained unchanged.	173	209
Apr. 11	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports appeal from Rumanian M.F.A. to Reich Foreign Minister to prevail upon Budapest to declare that Hungary is prepared to respect the Hungarian-Rumanian frontier and to negotiate with the Rumanian Government on frontier demarcation.	180	216
Apr. 14	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 180, and states that instructions to inform M.F.A. of Hungarian <i>démarchés</i> are not intended as German mediation between Hungary and Rumania.	194	236
Apr. 14	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports explanation given by Rumanian M.F.A. about the attitude of his Government towards British guarantee; Gafencu would welcome a German declaration of guarantee also.	195	236
Apr. 18	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Records conversation between Ribbentrop and Gafencu; latter questioned about Rumania's determination to carry out Economic Treaty. Ribbentrop's views on British opposition to Germany; Gafencu's account of Rumania's relations with other Powers, attitude to British proposals, relations with U.S.S.R., Turkey, attitude to President Roosevelt's message. Discussion of German-Rumanian relations; Hungaro-Rumanian relations.	227	278
Apr. 19	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Record of conversation between Hitler and the Rumanian M.F.A.; Gafencu's views on the British guarantee; Hitler's account of his political aims; German-Rumanian relations assured as a result of mutual trade interests.	234	290
May 3	<i>Note by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department</i> Has severely warned the leader of the German national group in Transylvania against introducing militant organizations on the German model.	319	413
May 6	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that, at audience with King Carol, latter complained of German refusal to supply Rumania with military equipment from Protectorate, as being contrary to previous promise. Recommends making at least a gesture over this.	337	438

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
May 8	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that Gafencu, during his recent tour, stated Rumania's policy to be no alliances against Germany and no dealings with U.S.S.R. Gafencu had told British statesmen he was convinced Hitler did not want war, but wanted understanding with Britain.	342	452
May 9	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that Deputy People's Commissar Potemkin, during his visit to Bucharest, made no offer to Gafencu nor was the question of a guarantee or of assistance broached.	349	459
May 10	<i>The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 337 and contradicts statement that none of the military equipment available from the Protectorate can be given to Rumania; but deliveries are likely to be on a small scale in view of German requirements.	354	464
May 13	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 349 and reports that M.F.A. has read him an account of Potemkin's visit, according to which Gafencu stated Rumania did not wish to enter into an alliance with either U.S.S.R. or Axis Powers.	375	484
May 13	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 354, and states has communicated contents to Minister President, who expressed himself as unable to understand German attitude over supplying Rumania from Czech military stocks. Recommends adopting generous attitude towards Rumania.	376	485
May 17	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that King Carol has expressed the desire to have Colonel Gerstenberg as Air Attaché in Bucharest, to supervise Rumania's air rearmament and recommends adopting the King's suggestion.	398	521
May 23	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits information supplied by M.F.A. about latter's recent conversation with Yugoslav M.F.A. Both agreed that in order to maintain Balkan Pact Balkans must remain independent, and that Anglo-Turkish agreement must not extend to Balkans.	428	565
June 7	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Instructions to see M.F.A. before latter's departure for Ankara, and inform him that Germany expects him to make absolutely clear to Turks that Balkan Pact States will not, either directly or indirectly, become an object of Anglo-Turkish agreements.	488	657
June 10	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 488 and reports action taken. Gafencu said he adhered firmly to the view, as agreed with Yugoslav M.F.A., that Anglo-Turkish agreement must in no way refer to the Balkans.	504	693
June 12	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Rumanian M.F.A., who attributed proposed Anglo-Turkish treaty to effect on Turkey of Italian occupation of Albania. Gafencu believed his efforts had been successful in excluding Balkans from final version of this treaty.	513	710

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 24	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with M.F.A. on latter's return from Ankara; Gafencu stated he had definite promises from Turks that Balkans would not be mentioned in final treaty with Britain. Had warned Turkish M.F.A. against including Balkans in Franco-Turkish Declaration.	561	777
June 25	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 561 and transmits further account of Gafencu's conversations in Ankara, derived from protocol on these negotiations which latter read out to him. Gafencu further stated that he had again rejected Turkish proposal for a Black Sea Pact.	567	787
July 6	<i>The Legation in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conclusion of negotiations with Rumanian Ministers on war material questions, and gives details of terms of payment agreed.	621	863
July 7	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports statements from German press published in Rumanian papers that Germany is prepared to support Bulgaria's revisionist claims against Rumania, and requests instructions.	625	867
July 7	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 625 and reports conversation with M.F.A. who was unable to understand support given in German and Italian press to Bulgarian claims against Rumania.	627	868
July 8	<i>The Legation in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 621 and reports signature of Protocols on deliveries of war material and aircraft. Gives details of further economic questions remaining for decision by Government Committees.	632	879
July 8	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 625 and denies that any comment in German press has supported Bulgaria's revisionist claims against Rumania.	633	881
July 8	<i>German-Rumanian Secret Protocol</i> Terms on which competent Rumanian authorities may place orders for war material with firms in Germany.	638	885
July 8	<i>The Rumanian Minister of Economics to Minister Clodius</i> Letter confirming that Rumanian Government agree that payment for German deliveries of air armament material be made by additional deliveries of Rumanian petroleum.	639	886
July 11	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 627, and requests that M.F.A. be promptly informed that there is no deviation in German policy towards Rumania. Understanding for Bulgarian aspirations shown in German press not at expense of Rumania.	651	899
July 13	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 633 and 651 and reports has communicated their substance to M.F.A. Has again discussed with Gafencu question of British and French agreements with Turkey.	662	912

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939 July 30	<i>The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Rumania</i> States that Air Ministry have now approved agreement of July 8 for supplying German aircraft material to Rumania, and requests urgent action to obtain additional Rumanian petroleum.  [See also under <i>France, Great Britain, Hungary, Turkey, U.S.S.R. and Yugoslavia.</i> ]	742	1021

## SLOVAKIA

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939 Mar. 16	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Sends text of Slovak Minister President's request to Hitler for German protection and Hitler's reply.	10	10
Mar. 18	<i>German-Slovak Treaty of Protection</i> German-Slovak Treaty by which the German Reich assumes protection of the political independence and territorial integrity of the Slovak State and receives the right to set up military installations in a certain zone, with Confidential Protocol on economic and financial cooperation between the German Reich and the Slovak State.  <i>Editors' Note</i> German policy towards the Sic organization and the Carpatho-Ukraine.	40	42  90
Mar. 25	<i>The Consul-General and Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits and comments on a note verbale from the Slovak Foreign Ministry, and points out the prejudicial effect produced by the removal of material by German troops from the occupied area.	95	114
Mar. 25	<i>Minute by an Official of Political Division I</i> As instructed, has informed OKW that the Foreign Ministry attaches importance to speedy evacuation of occupied Slovak territory beyond the Treaty demarcation line.	98	116
Mar. 27	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb</i> Gives account of the Hungarian-Slovak frontier incident on March 23, and subsequent developments.	111	137
Mar. 28	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVb</i> Lists points made in a discussion in the General Staff, at which Foreign Ministry was represented, on Slovak complaints against German military authorities.	117	146
Apr. 15	<i>Unsigned Foreign Ministry Memorandum</i> Lists requirements which OKW expects Slovak Government to fulfil under the Treaty of Protection.	206	254
Apr. 19	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Record of conference in the German Foreign Ministry with the Slovak Ministers on questions arising from the Treaty of Protection.	235	294

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LXXI

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 21	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits an <i>aide-memoire</i> from the Slovak Foreign Ministry giving the Slovak view as to how the German-Slovak Treaty should be interpreted, and complaining of the conduct of the German military authorities in Slovakia.	554	755
June 22	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with Slovak Minister about German-Slovak politico-military negotiations. Minister informed that demands of German Military Delegation in Bratislava are made in the name of the German Government.	559	774
July 3	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Slovak Minister who raised objections to way in which Treaty of Protection was being applied by the German military delegation in Bratislava.	611	840
July 10	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Slovakia</i> Instructions to ensure that Slovak Government grant all necessary facilities for execution of certain German military works, even when outside the zone of protection.	644	890
July 13	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has explained to Slovak Minister impossibility of Slovaks seeing Ribbentrop or Hitler, and has stressed that German negotiators in Bratislava were acting on instructions from the Reich authorities.	667	916
July 21	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Information, telephoned by Consul General in Bratislava, about the action taken by the Slovak Minister of War in ordering a Slovak battalion to move into the protected zone, protests by the German Military Mission, and the situation resulting therefrom.	696	952
July 31	<i>The Minister in Slovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that negotiations on the German-Slovak treaty on zones of protection now concluded; some Slovak amendments will require German political and military approval. Slovak attitude about German restrictions on strength of Slovak army.	747	1025
Aug. 4	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Poland</i> States German demands made to Slovak Government to stop any Slovak contacts with Poland contrary to German interests.  [See also under Hungary.]	768	1063

## SPAIN AND PORTUGAL

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 18	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Portugal</i> States is informed that Spanish Ambassador in Lisbon has been instructed to sound Portuguese Government on Portuguese accession to Anti-Comintern Pact. Results to be awaited before taking further steps.	224	274

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 21	<i>The Minister in Portugal to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has raised unobtrusively question of Portugal's accession to Anti-Comintern Pact with Spanish Ambassador there; latter considered this is out of the question for the time being.	241	301
June 11	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Serrano Suñer, who explained how welcome a German-Vatican <i>détente</i> would be to foreign policy of Franco's Government in combating anti-Axis propaganda in Spain; Mussolini shared this view.	507	697
June 13	<i>Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter reporting information from Ciano that Serrano Suñer had referred to the remarks of a German liaison officer attached to Franco's H.Q., as conveying an unfortunate impression of the Third Reich to Spaniards.	522	719
July 2	<i>The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has received assurance from Spanish M.F.A. that, contrary to press reports, no important negotiations will be conducted with the Italians during Ciano's visit to Spain.	604	830
July 2	<i>The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has discussed with the Spanish authorities statements attributed to two Spanish generals about Spain's attitude in a future war.	605	830
July 8	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Spain</i> Instructions to state that a visit to Germany by General Franco would be welcome as would also a visit by Serrano Suñer.	634	882
July 16	<i>The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has been informed by Franco that latter recommended to Ciano bringing pressure to bear on the Vatican to influence American Catholics against Roosevelt's re-election as President. [See also under <i>Italy</i> .]	678	929

## SWITZERLAND

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Swiss Minister about press reports that Paris and London had been in touch with Berne over a Franco-British agreement to protect Swiss neutrality.	109	136
Mar. 30	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> The Swiss Minister has stated that Swiss Government were not involved either officially or semi-officially in Anglo-French discussions on protection of Switzerland, Belgium and the Netherlands, and regard these discussions as <i>res inter alios acta</i> .	129	158
Apr. 11	<i>The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports reasons given by Federal Councillor Motta for Swiss call-up and frontier defence measures on March 24; latter also gave an account of conversation which the Swiss Minister in Paris had had with French Foreign Ministry concerning Anglo-French guarantee.	181	218

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
May 2	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has informed the Swiss Minister that the reactions of the Swiss press to Hitler's speech were more hostile than those of any other country.	310	401
May 15	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Switzerland</i> Refers to document No. 181; states that the reply on the subject of Anglo-French guarantees of Swiss neutrality is not satisfactory and sends instructions to raise the matter again.	384	500
July 10	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> In view of decision by Ribbentrop to stiffen attitude of countries affected by British policy, proposes to make representations to Swiss Minister on recent Swiss statements.	646	893
July 13	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Swiss Minister, to whom he represented that Swiss attitude to the Franco-British offer of a guarantee was not beyond reproach.	666	915
July 20	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Swiss Minister, who, in response to previous remonstrances, presented a Note defining Swiss attitude towards neutrality and towards promises of help by other Powers.	692	948

## TURKEY

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 15	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned that French are negotiating with Turks over uniting Hatay to Turkey in return for a pact of mutual assistance.	3	5
Mar. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Secretary General of Turkish Foreign Ministry, who stated Turkey was willing to co-operate in making the Balkans an economic hinterland for Germany, if the latter would refrain from pressing the Balkans to take sides in the ideological struggle. Requests instructions.	32	32
Mar. 21	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey</i> Refers to document No. 3 and sends instructions to inform the Turkish Government that Germany regards the proposed Franco-Turkish mutual assistance pact as in contradiction to previous Turkish assurances to Germany.	59	68
Mar. 23	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 59 and reports has been told by M.F.A. of tentative Franco-Turkish conversations on Hatay, and of certain French proposals, but that, in accordance with previous declarations, Turkey continues to decline to conclude a general treaty of assistance with any Great Power.	72	84
Mar. 31	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey</i> Refers to document No. 32, and states that the Embassy should let it be known that Germany welcomes Turkey's attitude to new situation and her readiness to cooperate in development of German economic relations with Balkans.	133	168

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 31	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 83 (see under <i>Europe: General</i> ) and gives precise terms of Turkish reply to British <i>démarche</i> as ascertained from Numan Menemencioğlu who added that Turkish policy had not changed from that repeatedly explained to Ribbentrop.	134	169
Apr. 4	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Has been assured by Turkish Ambassador that rumours of Turkish Government adopting favourable attitude to British encirclement plans without foundation.	151	188
Apr. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews Turkish policy; considers Turkish Government desire to adhere as long as possible to line of strictest neutrality; stresses importance of Italian policy in determining Turkish attitude.	226	276
Apr. 25	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Transmits confidential information that the Turkish Government have apparently entered into conversations with the British Government of a more far-reaching nature than they care to admit to the Germans.	259	323
Apr. 28	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Turkey</i> Reviews available information on Anglo-Turkish and Turco-Soviet negotiations, and requests report.	281	355
Apr. 29	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with President, whom he reassured about Polish question, Italian aspirations, and German intentions towards Balkan Pact; Papen repeated that Germany expected strictest neutrality from Turkey in event of war in Mediterranean.	288	364
May 2	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> According to reliable information, the Turkish Government have replied to the British offer of a pact with certain proposals which show that the conclusion of an Anglo-Turkish pact depends on the result of negotiations with the U.S.S.R. Italian counter action desired.	305	397
May 3	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has again ascertained, in conversations with Turkish Minister President and M.F.A., that deterioration in Turco-Italian relations is causing Turkey to draw closer to Britain. Recommends that Italy make some positive contribution towards improvement.	315	408
May 3	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Telephone conversation with Göring who, with Hitler's agreement, does not wish Turkey to receive the heavy guns she has ordered. Some excuse must be found for non-delivery.	321	416
May 4	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Secretary General of Turkish Foreign Ministry has confirmed Papen's own view of the situation as previously reported. Ciano's assurance to Turkish Ambassador insufficient to restore the situation. Papen promised to ask Ribbentrop to discuss matters further in Italy.	324	418



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 5	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 324, and expresses his conviction that only a complete reorientation of Rome to the Balkan Pact would make it possible to detach Turkey from her ties with Britain. Recommends that Ribbentrop discuss this question in Rome.	333	430
May 6	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Regrets has failed in his endeavours to persuade Turkish Government to await outcome of talks between Ribbentrop and Ciano before announcing agreement with Britain.	336	436
May 9	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey</i> Refers to documents Nos. 315, 324, 333 and 336, and states that no information is yet available on conversations between Ribbentrop and Ciano. Instructions not to allow impression to be created of any difference between German and Italian views on Balkan Pact.	347	457
May 12	<i>Editors' Note</i> Anglo-Turkish Declaration on mutual assistance in the event of war in the Mediterranean.		483
May 13	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has ascertained from conversation with M.F.A. that conclusion of final Anglo-Turkish pact will take some weeks. Considers this will allow of ascertaining whether German-Turkish relations can be maintained. Believes Turkish policy could be changed were Italian threat to disappear.	374	484
May 20	<i>Ambassador Papen to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Encloses a copy of a memorandum which he has sent Ribbentrop for his conversation with Ciano, putting the case for Italian assurances to Turkey in order to try to detach Turkey from British leading strings.	413	544
May 24	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Record of an interdepartmental conference on deliveries of war material under contract to Turkey, and on the policy to be adopted with respect to various economic agreements with Turkey.	435	581
May 30	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> After discussions with relevant Ministries and with German Ambassador to Turkey, submits proposals on policy to be adopted towards Turkey over extension of economic agreements and deliveries of war material.	454	610
June 5	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Turkish Ambassador on Germany holding up deliveries of certain war materials, and on alleged Turkish ban on chrome exports to Germany. Reassurances to Ambassador regarding Italian intentions towards Turkey.	472	633
June 5	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Conversation with Turkish M.F.A., to whom he expressed, as instructed, Reich Government's profound surprise at political course taken by Turkey.	475	638

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939 June 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Ruling by Ribbentrop that Turkish representatives are not to be received in the Foreign Ministry.	483	650
June 7	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversations with Turkish Secretary General and President on whom he impressed that maintenance of German friendship must be made dependent on extent and duration of Turkish commitments to Britain.	489	658
June 8	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 475 and 489 and sends more detailed account of conversations recorded therein.	495	666
June 8	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Conversation between Ribbentrop and Turkish Ambassador. Complaint that, in spite of Germany's friendly conduct, Turkish policy on Anglo-Turkish Declaration amounted to attempt to take part in encirclement of Germany. Ambassador replied by giving Turkey's reasons for anxiety regarding Axis policy.	496	670
June 12	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. who referred to recent serious conversation between Ribbentrop and Turkish Ambassador in Berlin and asked the reason; Papen replied that intention was to make clear to Turkish Ambassador gravity of situation that had arisen in consequence of Turkish policy.	512	709
June 13	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports he has made clear to Turkish Secretary General the need to leave the Balkan Powers out of forthcoming Franco-Turkish declaration. Numan replied that Franco-Turkish declaration would be similar to Anglo-Turkish one, but gave assurance that Balkans would not be included in final pact.	518	714
June 16	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey</i> Refers to document No. 518, and expresses surprise that, if Balkans not to be brought into final pact with Britain and France, they should be included in Franco-Turkish declaration: instructions to press that this paragraph of declaration be omitted.	523	732
June 22	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 523 and reports conversation with Secretary General on forthcoming Franco-Turkish declaration which Numan refused to modify in sense desired by Germany. Numan's views on extent of Turkish commitments in possible cases of conflict; Turkish participation in a world war would be purely defensive.	556	764
June 23	<i>Editors' Note</i> Signature of Franco-Turkish Declaration of Mutual Assistance and Agreement on cession of the Hatay to Turkey.		777
June 24	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits confidential information on recent discussions in Ankara between Rumanian and Turkish M.F.A.'s. Gafencu given assurance by Saracoğlu that reference to Balkans would not be included in final Anglo-Turkish treaty: policy towards Bulgaria also discussed.	563	779

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
June 24	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with Turkish Counsellor who requested reply to previous questions about start of German-Turkish economic negotiations and about Germany withholding delivery of certain war materials. No definite reply given on either point.	565	784
June 30	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that British wish Turkey to guarantee Rumania's non-Balkan frontiers, in return for British guarantee of Thracian frontiers. Is making strong representations about this and recommends similar action in Bucharest.	590	814
July 5	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Numan about terms of political treaty under negotiation with Britain; signature expected shortly.	616	846
July 28	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Believes that his efforts to persuade Numan to limit extent of fresh political commitments have resulted in Turkish decision not to conclude bipartite pacts with Britain and France, but a tripartite pact instead.	730	1009
Aug. 7	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Has reviewed, with Reich Ministry of Economics, question of countering Turkey's political change of course by economic measures; proposes restricting economic relations with Turkey to minimum compatible with Germany's requirements of Turkish raw materials, particularly chrome.  [See also under <i>Europe: General, France, Great Britain, Italy and Rumania.</i> ]	782	1081

## UNITED STATES

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 17	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has formally notified U.S. Government of the establishment of the Protectorate. Has been informed that U.S. Government have decided to impose "countervailing duties" on imports from Germany.	14	14
Mar. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 27 and suggests that, as reply to imposition of "countervailing duties", German measures against imports of U.S. cotton would be efficacious.	24	26
Mar. 18	<i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in the United States</i> Refers to document No. 14 and sends instructions to protest to the U.S. Government against the imposition of "countervailing duties".	27	28

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 27 and reports that U.S. Treasury has announced decision to impose "countervailing duties" on all dutiable imports from Germany, and for what reasons.	33	33
Mar. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews reactions of U.S. press and public opinion to events in Czecho-Slovakia.	34	34
Mar. 21	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 33; reviews effects of the imposition of "countervailing duties" on German imports and suggests German counter measures.	56	64
Mar. 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned from Japanese Counsellor of Embassy that British soundings about American support in the event of a conflict between Britain and Japan over Hong Kong received a negative reply.	66	75
Mar. 23	<i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy in the United States</i> Instructions to represent to U.S. Government that the U.S. Treasury order of March 18, suspending most favoured treatment for products from Bohemia and Moravia, does not take account of actual conditions, and to report whether the U.S. Government are ready to rescind this order.	71	83
Mar. 25	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 56 and reports efforts to obtain release of certain German imports from the imposition of provisional additional duties; recommends abolition of the Inland Account Procedure.	89	109
Mar. 27	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 71, and states has transmitted a Note to U.S. Secretary of State.	104	127
Mar. 27	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews U.S. foreign policy with particular reference to the situation in Europe.	107	129
Mar. 27	<i>Consul General Wiedemann to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter describing his reception in San Francisco; discusses the American attitude towards Germany, and his own plans.	113	140
Mar. 30	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Reviews effect of economic measures taken by the USA in consequence of the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia, and discusses possible German counter measures.	130	159
Apr. 5	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 89, and requests authority to hold informal discussions with U.S. Customs Bureau and to promise abolition of Inland Account Procedure, if removal of the additional duties can thereby be obtained by April 23.	157	194

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Apr. 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on impression made in USA by Italian action against Albania, and forecasts effect on U.S. policy.	179	215
Apr. 15	<i>President Roosevelt to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Message appealing to Hitler in interests of world peace, to give assurance that he will not attack or invade certain specified independent nations of Europe and Near East, from which President will obtain reciprocal assurances. On basis of these assurances President proposes prompt discussion on general disarmament and on development of international trade.	200	243
Apr. 15	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned confidentially that President's appeal was brought about by news of failure of Anglo-French alliance policy.	201	245
Apr. 17	<i>Consul General Wiedemann to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter describing his efforts to influence U.S. opinion in favour of Germany.	222	271
Apr. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Forecasts issue of fresh regulations on countervailing duties and recommends waiting for them before starting negotiations between German Embassy and U.S. Treasury.	223	273
Apr. 20	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on the reaction of American press and public to President Roosevelt's peace appeal.	238	297
Apr. 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports further on reaction of American press and public to President Roosevelt's peace appeal; press agitation against Germany continues unabated.	244	304
Apr. 24	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on flood of suggestions reaching Embassy from all sections of the population for Hitler's forthcoming speech. Lists main arguments advanced against President's peace appeal.	255	318
Apr. 25	<i>Note by Ambassador Dieckhoff (Berlin)</i> Proposes that Thomsen be consulted about President Roosevelt's alleged declaration on sending an expeditionary force to Europe. Expresses own fears of the likelihood of this.	264	331
Apr. 26	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in the United States</i> Refers to agency report that President Roosevelt has stated that no American expeditionary force will be sent to Europe during his tenure of office, and requests report.	267	334
Apr. 26	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 267 and reports that despatch of an American expeditionary force in the first six months of a European war is unlikely.	268	335

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1930			
Apr. 28	<i>Directive by the State Secretary</i> Prescribes formal statement to be made to U.S. Chargé d'Affaires when handing him, at noon, text of Hitler's speech.	280	354
Apr. 28	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on first reactions to Hitler's speech; reply to President's peace appeal has made great impression.	283	357
Apr. 29	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 283, and reports further reactions to Hitler's speech.	287	363
May 1	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that American press is now devoting attention to that part of Hitler's speech which answered President Roosevelt.	301	394
May 2	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews provisional situation arising on expiry of the "cash and carry" clause of the Neutrality Act.	308	399
May 6	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Consul General Wiedemann</i> Letter in reply to two letters from Wiedemann; trusts latter does not mean he has sought political discussions with Hearst and Hoover; considers reception of Communist delegates contrary to German diplomatic practice.	340	443
May 9	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports American views on German-Italian military alliance, and on fall of Litvinov.	348	457
May 17	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Analyses attitude of American public to neutrality, and discusses methods employed by Roosevelt to overcome isolationism in the event of a European war.	403	526
May 26	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to arrest of Kuhn, leader of the German-American Bund, for embezzlement, and speculates on the political factors which may influence proceedings against him.	439	588
May 29	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 308 and reviews Secretary of State's proposals for revision of the neutrality legislation.	448	600
June 16	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Describes reaction of public opinion to the Anglo-Japanese conflict in Tientsin, and forecasts probable course of U.S. policy.	531	731
June 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews policy of Roosevelt Government in the Far East and concludes that this will be to avoid as long as possible driving Japan still closer to the totalitarian Powers.	557	766

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1939			
July 10	<i>Consul General Wiedemann to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Replies to document No. 340, and explains his conduct. Describes attitude of public towards Germany, and comments on impression made by various recent German visitors.	649	895
July 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Senate Foreign Relations Committee have adjourned discussion on neutrality question till next session, and discusses present position.	650	899
July 24	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on use of press material supplied to the Embassy, and submits proposals for improving German methods of propaganda in the USA.	709	967
July 26	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Describes reaction of press and public to the Wohlthat-Hudson conversation and to British concessions to Japan in Anglo-Japanese negotiations.	725	1002
July 31	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 725 and reports has learned from well-informed source that President anxious about possibility of Soviet unwillingness to conclude alliance with Britain and France. Assumes U.S. Ambassador in Moscow has received special instructions.	750	1028
Aug. 10	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Press Department</i> Describes visit of American Postmaster General, Farley, to Berlin; attempts made to get him away from undesirable influence of the American Embassy in Berlin.	781	1078

## U.S.S.R.

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 13	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews Stalin's speech at the Congress of the Communist Party on March 10.	1	1
Mar. 19	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports receipt of Soviet Note of protest about German action over Czecho-Slovakia and conversation with Litvinov as to the practical import of this Note.	43	47
Mar. 20	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 43 and states that British and French Ambassadors have been told that their protests over Czecho-Slovak affair were unacceptable. Instructions that discussions on the matter in Moscow are also to be declined.	46	49
Mar. 20	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 43 and transmits text of Litvinov's Note of March 18 in which the Soviet Government state they cannot recognize incorporation of Czechia and Slovakia into the German Reich on the grounds that this has no legal validity and violates the principle of self-determination of peoples.	50	52

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 20	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Tippleskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep</i> Extract from a letter: discusses Soviet attitude, in which he detects certain signs of a change towards Germany; points out economic importance to Germany of Soviet Union, in view of breakdown in German economic negotiations with Britain and France.	51	55
Mar. 21	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Reports information from the Finnish M.F.A. about various Russian proposals, regarding the Finnish archipelago between Hogland and Leningrad, which Finland has rejected.	60	69
Mar. 23	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 50 and transmits translation of official Soviet communiqué on Soviet proposal for a conference between Britain, France, Rumania, Poland, Turkey and the Soviet Union.	75	88
Mar. 24	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned from Hudson that latter's trade discussions in Moscow are only preliminary; if successful, economic negotiations will be conducted in London. Has ascertained nothing regarding a British invitation to Litvinov.	81	98
Mar. 27	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Tippleskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep</i> Extract from a letter: discusses Soviet attitude to British enquiry concerning anti-aggression declaration, Soviet foreign policy, and prospects of agreement in Soviet-Japanese fisheries dispute.	112	138
Apr. 5	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports and comments on Tass démenti of alleged Soviet undertaking to supply Poland with war material in the event of war, and to close raw material market to Germany.	161	196
Apr. 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records first official call on him by Russian Ambassador, Merekalov, who enquired about certain contracts with Skoda works; views of Ambassador on German-Russian relations.	215	266
Apr. 7	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records visit from Russian Ambassador who presented note verbale on Russian contracts with the Skoda works. Ambassador regarded fulfilment of these contracts as touchstone of Russo-German economic relations.	217	267
Apr. 24	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that text of telegram from Roosevelt to Kalinin was published in Moscow press and comments on treatment of Roosevelt peace appeal in Moscow foreign language press.	257	320
May 4	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on method of announcing in press the replacement of Litvinov by Molotov as Foreign Commissar, and speculates on possible reasons for change.	325	419



Date	Subject	Doc No.	Page
1939			
May 5	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires who was informed that Soviet contracts placed with Skoda Works would be fulfilled. Chargé enquired about resumption of economic negotiations, broken off in February, and further tried to learn whether dismissal of Litvinov would cause change in German attitude to U.S.S.R.	332	429
May 9	<i>Minute by an Official of the Press Department</i> Conversation with Russian Counsellor of Embassy Astakhov on question of reserve adopted by German press towards U.S.S.R. not being reciprocated by Soviet press, and significance of Litvinov's removal for Soviet foreign policy.	351	460
May 17	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires who stated that his Government desired to retain the Soviet Trade Delegation in Prague, and proceeded to discuss German-Soviet relations and prospects of improvement.	406	535
May 21	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> States that, on basis of results of Ambassador's conversation with Molotov (document No. 424) a waiting policy must be pursued to see if Soviets will speak more openly.	414	547
May 22	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses memorandum of statements made to Italian Ambassador in Moscow by Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Potemkin, on latter's visits to Ankara, Sofia, Bucharest and Warsaw.	420	553
May 22	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter transmitting a memorandum on his conversation with Molotov on May 20 about the resumption of German-Soviet economic negotiations, and commenting on attitude adopted by Molotov, who appears to want from Germany proposals of a political nature.	424	558
May 25	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Reviews present stage reached in Anglo-Russian negotiations, and possibilities of German action to prevent closer relations being formed between Britain, France and the Soviet Union.	437	586
May 26	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from his Swedish colleague about refusal of Finnish Government to give Soviet Government information regarding fortification of the Aaland Islands; attitude of Soviet press.	440	588
May ...	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Cancelled draft telegram of instructions to Ambassador to seek an interview with Molotov and to submit orally to him the German Government's views on German-Soviet relations, in response to Molotov's statement making economic relations dependent on a clarification of political relations.	441	589
May 26	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 414 and sends Ambassador instructions to continue to maintain an attitude of complete reserve.	442	593

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
May 27	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Letter explaining reasons for change of plans about a German approach to the U.S.S.R., and referring to Hitler's approval for fresh plans.	446	597
May 29	<i>Editors' Note</i> Discussions between Ribbentrop and the Italian Ambassador on May 29 on possibilities of forestalling a successful outcome of the Anglo-French negotiations with the U.S.S.R.		601
[May 29]	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Makes proposals about a statement to be made to the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires by the State Secretary in response to Soviet request to maintain their Trade Delegation in Prague.	449	602
May 29	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Lists points to be made on the German attitude over Molotov's making the resumption of German-Soviet economic negotiations subject to a clarification of political relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R.	450	603
May 30	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires on way in which Soviet request to maintain their Trade Delegation in Prague affected German-Soviet economic relations, and the connection between economic and political relations.	451	604
May 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Informs Ambassador of change of tactics in Berlin on question of making contact with U.S.S.R. and describes conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires (document No. 451).	452	608
May 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 452 and states that there are no objections to Hilger getting in touch with Mikoyan of his own accord, but that he must confine himself to talking in general terms only.	453	610
June 1	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews Molotov's speech to Supreme Soviet on May 31, from which can be inferred that, in spite of deep mistrust, Soviet Union still prepared to conclude a treaty with Britain and France, though only on condition that all Soviet demands are accepted.	463	624
June 2	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 453, and reports on a conversation between Hilger and Mikoyan. Hilger's attempts to dispel Soviet doubts about German sincerity in desiring resumption of economic negotiations. Enquiry by Mikoyan as to <i>modus procedendi</i> proposed for such a resumption.	465	627
June 5	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter in reply to document No. 446, correcting impression gained in Berlin that Molotov, during interview of May 20, had rejected a German-Soviet arrangement. Believes Molotov almost invited political discussion.	478	642
June 7	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 463 and reports comment in <i>Pravda</i> on views expressed in British and French press on Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations, from which emerges importance attached by Soviet Union to guarantee of Estonia, Latvia and Finland.	486	655

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1939			
June 7	<i>Unsigned Memorandum from the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to statement made by Molotov to Ambassador on May 20, that, for any economic negotiations, a "political basis" would have to be found, and proposes measures in domestic, foreign and economic policy whereby such a basis might be constructed.	490	659
June 7	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Schnurre recommends, on basis of recent conversation between Hilger and Mikoyan, that he himself should proceed to Moscow to discuss directly with Mikoyan <i>modus procedendi</i> for resumption of economic negotiations.	491	662
June 9	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 485 and states that the Soviet Government agree to Schnurre's visit to Moscow, on certain conditions. Considers further study required and proposes that Hilger accompany him to Berlin for this purpose.	499	686
June 12	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Draft telegram referring to document No. 499; instructions to inform Mikoyan that German Government prepared to send fully empowered negotiator to Moscow for economic negotiations and to accept Soviet counter proposals of February last.	514	711
June 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 486 and comments on <i>Pravda</i> article dealing with the protection of Estonia, Latvia and Finland against aggression.	520	717
June 15	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with Bulgarian Minister, who described a conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin, during which latter said that if Germany would declare she would not attack the U.S.S.R., or if she would conclude non-aggression pact, the U.S.S.R. would probably refrain from concluding a treaty with Britain.	529	728
June 15	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Reviews previous course of German-Soviet economic negotiations, and concludes that, on resumption of negotiations, an attempt must first be made to improve upon latest Soviet offer of raw material deliveries. Political considerations may, however, dictate acceptance of existing Soviet offer.	530	729
June 16	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on unilateral official Soviet communiqué about conversation which took place on June 15 between the Soviet and British and French negotiators.	532	732
June 17	<i>Memorandum by Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin on German-Soviet relations. Chargé appeared to have correctly understood and reported home statements recently made to him by Weizsäcker.	540	741

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1939			
June 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits Hilger's account of his interview with Mikoyan on June 17, at which he presented German offer to send fully empowered negotiator to Moscow to resume economic negotiations on basis of last Soviet offer. Mikoyan continued to consider German answer as "not entirely favourable".	543	745
June 25	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation between Hilger and Mikoyan; latter stated that before going into question of a German plenipotentiary coming to Moscow for economic negotiations, he required to have specified those points on which, in German view, differences of opinion still existed.	568	788
June 27	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Explains Mikoyan's tactics over resumption of economic negotiations as based on suspicion that German offer at this juncture dictated by political considerations. Proposes dispelling suspicion by offering to conduct negotiations unobtrusively in Berlin or via Embassy in Moscow.	570	790
June 28	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Minutes on document No. 570, contesting views of German Ambassador in Moscow that economic negotiations with the U.S.S.R. should be conducted either in Berlin or by the Embassy in Moscow.	576	800
June 29	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on interview with Molotov who took note of statements that Germany would welcome a normalization of relations with the U.S.S.R., and had furnished proofs of her goodwill. Requests instructions on reply to be given to Mikoyan's questions, endorsed by Molotov, respecting resumption of economic negotiations.	579	805
June 29	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on article by Zhdanov in <i>Pravda</i> , entitled "British and French Governments do not want a treaty on the basis of equality with the Soviet Union".	582	808
June 29	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Refers to document No. 570 and reports Hitler's decision that the Russians are to be informed that, in view of their attitude, Germany would not be interested in a resumption of economic discussions at present.	583	810
June 30	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 579, and states that Ribbentrop considers sufficient has now been said in the political field; no further action should be taken until fresh instructions. Decision not yet reached on question of economic negotiations, so instructions should be awaited.	588	813
June 30	<i>Minute by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Note on directive to Embassy in Moscow contained in document No. 628, reviewing recent conversations with Mikoyan and Molotov, and suggesting that this directive should now be despatched.	596	820

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
July 3	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Sends further details on his conversation with Molotov to supplement document No. 579.	607	834
July 3	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by Potemkin that Soviet Government are prepared to meet German wishes respecting release of crew of <i>Komsomol</i> and certain other Soviet nationals.	610	839
July 4	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from his Italian colleague about latter's interview with Potemkin, who appeared more optimistic regarding Anglo-Soviet negotiations. On Rosso referring to German desire to normalize relations with U.S.S.R., Potemkin replied that Soviet-German agreement would represent most effective guarantee of peace.	613	842
July 4	<i>Herr Rudolf Nadolny to Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Letter discussing validity of German-Soviet Treaty of Berlin of 1920 and its applicability to the proposed Anglo-Russian agreement.	614	843
July 7	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to documents Nos. 568, 570 and 579, and gives the reply to be made to Mikoyan's question about points still outstanding between Germany and U.S.S.R. in the economic negotiations.	628	870
July 10	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 628 and reports action taken with Mikoyan.	642	889
July 10	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker</i> Letter expressing view that, whilst he agrees that no further action should be taken with Molotov, a more friendly treatment of Soviet officials in Berlin might prove German good will.	648	894
July 12	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Tippleskirch to Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Letter written from Berlin describing various conversations he has had in the Foreign Ministry on the future of German-Soviet relations.	661	910
July 16	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 642 and reports communication made to Hilger by Mikoyan that Soviet Deputy Trade Representative Babarin has been instructed to discuss directly in Berlin points still requiring clarification before resumption of German-Soviet economic negotiations.	677	928
July 18	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Discussion with Soviet Trade Representatives on questions still outstanding in German-Soviet economic negotiations. Soviet statement of views attached. Schnurre's comments on these views.	685	936
July 22	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits report published in Soviet press that German-Soviet trade and credit negotiations have been resumed in Berlin.	699	955

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1939			
July 22	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 677 and states that Soviet Trade Representative Babarin has now called on Schnurre; German policy on the economic negotiations will be to act in a markedly forthcoming manner. In respect of political conversations, the Ambassador is now empowered to pick up the threads again.	700	955
July 24	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who wished to discover German attitude to an invitation for two German personages to visit Agricultural Exhibition in Russia; this to be a modest start on resumption of cultural relations.	714	975
July 24	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Conversation with Russian Chargé d'Affaires who commented on Anglo-Japanese negotiations on Tientsin, spoke of Russian relations with Japan, and enquired about present German-Polish relations.	715	976
July 27	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 700, and describes conversation with Potemkin, who expressed pleasure about improved cultural contacts. Schulenburg took opportunity of again describing a normalization of German-Soviet relations as desirable.	727	1004
July 27	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Describes an informal conversation held, in accordance with instructions, with Head of Soviet Trade Delegation and Soviet Chargé d'Affaires. Discussion on advantages of a German-Soviet rapprochement, and various stages in which this might be achieved.	729	1006
July 29	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 727 and instructs Ambassador to await more detailed instructions before arranging further interviews.	734	1013
July 29	<i>The State Secretary to the Ambassador in the Soviet Union</i> Encloses copy of document No. 729, and requests that Molotov be sounded on same lines. If Molotov abandons his reserve, he may be told that Germany would be prepared to come to an understanding with the U.S.S.R. to respect Soviet interests in Poland and in Baltic question also.	736	1015
July 31	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 736 and requests Ambassador to report time of his next interview with Molotov. Instructions in document No. 700 also apply to this interview.	744	1022
Aug. 2	<i>Senior Counsellor Schnurre to Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Letter discussing difficulties in way of German business visits to Russia, and steps taken about cultural exchanges. Political background to latest instructions sent Ambassador; Ribbentrop's concern to obtain positive result in Russian question.	757	1046

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1939			
Aug. 3	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Informs Ambassador briefly of a conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires on August 2. Expressed German desire for remoulding of German-Russian relations, stated readiness for more concrete relations and requested to know whether Soviet Government also desire German-Russian relations to be placed on new basis.	758	1048
Aug. 3	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Refers to document No. 758 and informs Ambassador that, without prejudice to his conversation with Molotov, it is intended to continue in Berlin, in more concrete terms, conversation on harmonizing interests. Schnurre will therefore see Astakhov.	759	1048
Aug. 3	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Informs Ambassador more fully of conversation described in document No. 758. Indicated to Astakhov two conditions for remoulding of German-Soviet relations; stated that Germany in no hurry; hinted at understanding with Russia on fate of Poland. Indicated that more concrete conversations depended on Soviet Government officially communicating desire for remoulding relations.	760	1049
Aug. 3	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires on August 3. Discussion of economic negotiations and interview between Ribbentrop and Astakhov on preceding day. Schnurre explained that, though Ribbentrop had indicated no urgency, it would be expedient to continue conversations within next few days.	761	1051
Aug. 3	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits and comments on Tass communiqué about statements reported to have been made by British Foreign Under-Secretary on difference of opinion in negotiations with Moscow about infringing independence of Baltic States.	764	1055
Aug. 4	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 736 and 744 and reports conversation with Molotov, to whom he officially confirmed and amplified statements on German policy made by Schnurre to Soviet representatives in Berlin. Molotov stated that Soviet Government also desired normalization and improvement of relations with Germany, but continued to evince mistrust of German intentions.	766	1059
Aug. 5	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Conversation with Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, who stated that Soviet Government were desirous of continuing conversations on improvement of Soviet-German relations, and regarded conclusion of a credit agreement as first stage.	772	1067
Aug. 7	<i>The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 760, 759 and 761 and reports statement by Potemkin that Astakhov has already been given general instructions to continue conversations in Berlin and will now receive wider instructions.	775	1072
Aug. 7	<i>The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has been informed by M.F.A. of Molotov's statements to Finnish Minister in Moscow that Russia has no designs on Finland but must protect herself against lightning German attack on Leningrad. Molotov further explained Russia's interest in Aaland Islands.	776	1072

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1939			
Aug. 7	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Letter discussing possibilities of relaxing restrictions on social relations with Soviet Embassy, in order to ease German-Soviet relations.	778	1074
Aug. 7	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to Senior Counsellor Schliep</i> Letter giving personal impressions of Anglo-French negotiations in Moscow, and describing experiences of various diplomatic colleagues in conversations with Molotov.  [See also under <i>Baltic States, Europe: General, France, Great Britain and Northern States.</i> ]	779	1075

## YUGOSLAVIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
Mar. 18	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> German Air Attaché has been informed by Berlin that German aircraft firms have been authorized to submit tenders to Yugoslavia under the credit; Air Attaché believes Yugoslavia is extremely interested in the speedy conclusion of the armaments negotiations.	21	22
Mar. 19	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Has learned that recent events have aroused extreme anxiety, also in highest quarters, and expresses the view that should this continue it may lead to Yugoslavia turning towards the Western Powers.	41	45
Mar. 27	<i>The Ministry in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 21, and proposes that, if ban on submission of tenders to Yugoslavia by representatives of German aircraft industry cannot be lifted at once, firms concerned be authorized to submit tenders under the express condition that total armaments credit is approved by the competent Reich departments.	105	128
Mar. 30	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 105, and reports that high prices demanded by German armaments firms are hampering armaments negotiations.	128	157
Apr. 1	<i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> Refers to documents Nos. 105 and 128, and explains reasons for delay in giving final decision about conclusion of credit transaction.	142	178
Apr. 6	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on difficulties encountered in negotiations over the credit offered to Yugoslavia by Italy for financing State contracts.	168	204
Apr. 10	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on orders for aircraft to be expected from Yugoslavia when Credit Agreement is completed.	176	212



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1939			
Apr. 13	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Yugoslav M.F.A. has referred to Yugoslavia's attitude during events in Albania as proving her loyalty to policy of friendship towards the Axis Powers, and has asked for authoritative statement of Germany's interest in a strong and united Yugoslavia.	191	233
Apr. 13	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports fears expressed by Chief of the Yugoslav General Staff to German Military Attaché that agitation among <i>Volksdeutsche</i> may prejudice German-Yugoslav relations.	192	234
Apr. 14	<i>Note by the Deputy Director of the Information and Press Department</i> Has learned from Propaganda Ministry of request made by Cincar-Marković to Goebbels that Yugoslavia's recent attitude receive special recognition in German press. Instructions as to press treatment.	198	239
Apr. 15	<i>Note by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department</i> Refers to document No. 192 and records action taken to keep German national group in Yugoslavia completely quiet.	207	255
Apr. 16	<i>The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> States that delivery of bomber aircraft by required date impossible. Nothing can be said about later delivery as political prerequisites and credit conditions have not yet been clarified.	210	257
Apr. 22	<i>The Legation in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that War Minister raised subject of German armament credit, referring to a promise of a 200 million RM credit made by Göring. Minister emphasized urgency of credit question.	245	305
Apr. 22	<i>State Secretary Weizsäcker to Minister Heeren</i> Letter conveying Ribbentrop's annoyance at the way in which the public announcement of Cincar-Marković's visit to Berlin has been made; states that the initiative came from Yugoslavia.	251	311
Apr. 25	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Record of conversation between Ribbentrop and the Yugoslav M.F.A.: Ribbentrop's account of German foreign policy; views on German-Yugoslav relations; Cincar-Marković's account of his country's foreign policy; policy towards accession to Anti-Comintern Pact. Discussion of German-Yugoslav credit negotiations. Question of Yugoslavia's policy towards League of Nations.	262	325
Apr. 26	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff</i> Record of conversation between Hitler and Yugoslav M.F.A.: Hitler's review of Germany's position; his friendly policy towards Yugoslavia; views on Hungary and Rumania; policy towards Slovakia; weakness of British policy; position of Japan; progress and military strength of Italy.	271	339

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
Apr. 27	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Has learned from State Secretary for the Four Year Plan of conversation between Göring and Yugoslav M.F.A. in which Göring confirmed that Germany was, in principle, prepared to grant Yugoslavia a credit.	279	354
May 25	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop</i> Confidential report on line taken by Yugoslav Legation in Berlin as to the significance of the Prince Regent's visit to Berlin and on German-Yugoslav relations.	438	587
June 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Conversation between Yugoslav Prince Regent, Hitler and Ribbentrop on political situation; Ribbentrop's proposal for Yugoslav withdrawal from League of Nations.	474	635
June 16	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has asked M.F.A. if an early decision on Yugoslavia withdrawing from League of Nations could be expected. Cincar-Marković replied that Rumania must first be consulted, and that time was needed for preparation.	534	733
June 19	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to instructions to enquire about a Yugoslav proposal to Hungary for formation of a neutral bloc of four States and reports has so far been unable to take action, but can confirm Yugoslav desire for Hungarian-Rumanian and Bulgarian-Rumanian settlement.	544	748
June 27	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> States agreement reached in negotiations on Protocol for settling German credit for war material to Yugoslavia; recommends that the Protocol be now signed.	573	793
June 29	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Considers that, in view of reports of French offers of armaments credits to Yugoslavia, signature of the Protocol on the German Armaments Credit to Yugoslavia is a matter of urgency.	586	811
July 1	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> Refers to document No. 544, and sends instructions to approach Yugoslav Government about their plan for forming a neutral four Power bloc consisting of Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary.	598	822
July 3	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 598 and reports conversation with M.F.A., about new line in Turkish foreign policy and Cincar-Marković's desire to buttress Yugoslav policy of neutrality by a <i>rapprochement</i> to similarly oriented neighbouring States.	609	838
July 5	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Announces signature of Protocol on German arms credit to Yugoslavia (document No. 620), and reports about position on the Yugoslav oil concession to Germany.	615	845
July 5	<i>German-Yugoslav Secret Protocol</i> Terms on which Yugoslavia is to be granted a credit for purchase of war material in Germany; amount of credit still unspecified.	620	860

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1939			
July 8	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Has told Yugoslav Minister that Yugoslavia should disassociate herself from the Balkan Entente.	637	884
July 15	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with Yugoslav Minister about views expressed by Ribbentrop that Yugoslavia should disassociate herself from Balkan Pact and League of Nations.	675	927
July 17	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> Refers to rumours, in connection with Prince Regent's visit to London, about Yugoslavia breaking away to Western Powers, accepting French and British arms credits, and despatching gold reserves to London. Requests report.	680	931
July 17	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Statement by Yugoslav Minister giving details about Yugoslav request for arms. Minister's comments on the political significance of the Yugoslav request.	683	933
July 20	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Replies to document No. 680, that precise information on Yugoslav gold transfers to Britain not available. Comments on reasons underlying Prince Regent's visit to London, and probable course of Yugoslav foreign policy.	691	947
July 25	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Conversation with Yugoslav Minister whom he asked, as instructed, when Yugoslavia would leave League of Nations. Minister unable to reply, but described steps already taken towards gradual withdrawal from League.	720	994
July 29	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> Minister instructed to renew pressure on Yugoslav M.F.A. to withdraw from League of Nations; steps so far taken in this direction do not meet German expectations.	733	1012
July 31	<i>The Legation in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 733 and reports action taken with M.F.A. Latter replied that Yugoslavia had already broken away in spirit from League of Nations, but required formal pretext for withdrawal. This he expected to find during September Assembly.  [See also under Italy.]	745	1023



## No. 1

851/202530-34

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 447

Moscow, March 13, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Pol. V 2330.

Subject: Speech by Stalin at the Congress of the Communist Party.

In the first session of the eighteenth Party Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union of March 10, Stalin gave an *exposé* of the domestic and foreign policy of the Communist Party.

In that part of the speech devoted to foreign policy and in which was manifest unchanged adherence to the policy hitherto pursued, it was noteworthy that Stalin's irony and criticism were directed in considerably sharper degree against Britain, i.e., against the reactionary forces in power there, than against the so-called aggressor States, and in particular, Germany. Moreover this was also evident in Manuilski's<sup>2</sup> report on the work of the Comintern.

Stalin's statements on foreign policy, as is usual here and in the manner familiar from the press, at first contrasted the prosperity of the Soviet Union with the appearance of crises in the capitalist world, in order to demonstrate that the capitalist States were seeking a way out of their critical situation in "the second imperialist war", which had already been unleashed by the so-called "aggressor States" from China to Spain. The struggle of the aggressor States was directed against the interests of Britain, France and the United States, who for their part made concession after concession to the aggressors. The weakness of the democratic Powers, apart from their fears of a revolutionary development in the event of a new war, was evident in the first place from the fact that they had abandoned the principle of collective security and had turned to a policy of non-intervention and neutrality. Underlying this policy was the wish to divert the aggressor States to other victims.

In this connection, Stalin also spoke of Germany and the Ukraine. He said: "Let us take Germany, for example. Austria has been ceded to her, in spite of the obligation to protect the former's independence, the Sudetenland was abandoned to her, Czecho-Slovakia was left to her fate, in violation of all obligations: then, however, the press began to publish lies about the 'weakness of the Russian Army', about the

<sup>1</sup> The date of receipt is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Dmitri Zakharovich Manuilski, a member of the Presidium of the Comintern, 1924-1943.

'disintegration of the Russian Air Force' and about 'disturbances' in the Soviet Union, thus pushing the Germans further eastwards, promising them an easy prey and saying: 'Just start a war with the Bolsheviks, everything else will take care of itself.' It must be admitted that this looks very like encouragement. The fuss made by the Anglo-French and North American press about the Soviet Ukraine is characteristic. The newspapermen of this press shouted themselves hoarse that the Germans were taking action against the Soviet Ukraine, that they already had possession of the so-called Carpatho-Ukraine with its population of some 700,000, and that by the spring of this year at the latest the Germans would add the Soviet Ukraine, which has over 30 million inhabitants, to the so-called Carpatho-Ukraine. It looks as if the purpose of this suspicious uproar was to engender the fury of the Soviet Union against Germany, to poison the atmosphere and to provoke a conflict with Germany without apparent reasons."

To these words Stalin added: "If there really are such lunatics who would wish to unite the Soviet Union [*sic?* Ukraine] with the Carpatho-Ukraine, there need be no doubt that there will be enough strait-jackets in the Soviet Union for such lunatics. . . . Even more characteristic is that some politicians and newspapermen in Europe and the United States have lost their patience waiting for a 'campaign against the Soviet Ukraine' and are now themselves beginning to reveal the reasons behind the policy of non-intervention. They say frankly and write in black and white that the Germans had bitterly disappointed them, as, instead of advancing further to the east, against the Soviet Union, they had turned westwards and demanded colonies. It can be believed that the Germans were given parts of Czecho-Slovakia as a reward for the undertaking to start a war with the Soviet Union, but that the Germans now refuse to fulfil the bargain and send these people packing."

On the attitude of the Soviet Union, Stalin said: "The Soviet Union naturally cannot pass over these ominous happenings. Every war, even a small one, unleashed by the aggressor States in some remote corner of the world constitutes a danger to the peace-loving States. How much greater a danger is presented by the new imperialist war, which has already involved more than 500 millions in Asia, Africa and Europe. Therefore our country has continued unswervingly the policy of maintaining peace, but at the same time has done very serious work in the sphere of strengthening the preparedness of our Red Army and our Red Fleet."

As further measures towards strengthening her position, the Soviet Union had entered the League of Nations which, "although a weak instrument of peace", might nevertheless restrain the unleashing of war.

Stalin presented the following points as the principles of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union:

"1) We stand for peace and the consolidation of economic relations with all countries and will abide by this if these countries adopt the same attitude towards the Soviet Union and will not attempt to damage the interests of our country.

2) We stand for peaceful, close and good-neighbourly relations with all countries having a common frontier with the Soviet Union; we take this attitude and will continue to take it if these countries adopt the same attitude to the Soviet Union and do not try either directly or indirectly to injure the integrity and inviolability of the frontiers of the Soviet State.

3) We stand for support of those peoples who have been the victims of aggression and who are fighting for the independence of their native land.

4) We do not fear the threats of the aggressors and we are ready to return in double measure every blow struck by the warmongers in their attempts to violate the integrity of the Soviet frontiers."

In conclusion Stalin formulated the guiding principles of the foreign policy of the Communist Party as follows:

"1) Still to continue to pursue a policy of peace and consolidation of economic relations with all countries.

2) To exercise caution and not to let our country be drawn into conflict by warmongers, whose custom it is to let others pull their chestnuts out of the fire.

3) To strengthen in every way the fighting efficiency of our Red Army and Fleet.

4) To strengthen the international bonds of friendship with the workers in all countries who are interested in peace and in friendship among the peoples."

The part of Stalin's speech dealing with domestic policy presented little new. It was characterized by a comparatively sober account of the economic and internal political situation. It would take ten to fifteen years "to catch up economically with the advanced capitalist countries", expressly renouncing all "fantasies" and adhering to the guiding principles and methods hitherto pursued.

I beg to reserve a report on the full course of the Congress.<sup>3</sup> The text of Stalin's speech will be sent when a German text is available.<sup>4</sup>

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (493/233240-47). This report, No. A/643, is dated Apr. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

## No. 2

1969/437924-25

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 79 of March 15

BUCHAREST, March 15, 1939—4:30 p.m.

Received March 16—9:30 p.m.

Pol. IV 1714.

Foreign Minister Gafencu told me the following:

1) Rumania intends to respect the situation created by the Vienna Award.<sup>1</sup> The Rumanian Government have not taken and will not take any steps to alter this situation.

2) If circumstances demand, Rumania is prepared to participate in a possible reorganisation of the situation with all the interested States, in particular the Vienna arbiters. This, however, applies only to the Carpatho-Ukraine, and not to Czechia or Slovakia, in which Rumania is disinterested.

The Foreign Minister asks the Reich Government to inform him of their views regarding the maintenance or the possible alteration of the present situation in the Carpatho-Ukraine.

The Foreign Minister said that he was having similar statements made in Berlin by the Chargé d'Affaires.<sup>2</sup> As his newspaper *Timpul* had inadvertently mentioned participation in the reorganisation of Czecho-Slovakia, he asks that this should be corrected, saying that only the Carpatho-Ukraine was meant.

A few Rumanian units are concentrated on the frontier facing Carpatho-Ukraine, but they are not to be given marching orders until the situation has been clarified. Rumania, however, will not look on idly if Rumanian villages and railway lines in the Carpatho-Ukraine are occupied by Hungary and if Hungary possibly occupies positions facing the new frontier.

So far no military regrouping had taken place on the Hungarian frontier but men on leave had been recalled. The Foreign Minister again asked for our cooperation with him; Poland had also promised him this and would take no action, even though she had concentrated troops on the frontier for security.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Victor Brabetzianu, Counsellor of Legation.



## No. 3

7481/E540399

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 47 of March 15

ANKARA, March 15, 1939—6:48 p.m.

Received March 16—2:00 a.m.

Pol. VII 450.

I hear from competent authority that the French are negotiating with the Turks over uniting Hatay<sup>1</sup> to Turkey. The French are alleged to be demanding the conclusion of a pact of mutual assistance from the Turks as a *quid pro quo*. The Turkish attitude to this matter has hitherto been evasive. The French Ambassador, Massigli, stated to diplomats here in this connection that the Reich Government had intimated to the Turkish Government that they would support the alleged Italian aspirations regarding Syria if Turkey deviated from her present policy of strict neutrality towards the Great Powers.

KROLL

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the Sanjak of Alexandretta, which had acquired a special regime of local autonomy within the French Mandate for Syria. Various agreements between France and Turkey concerning the Sanjak had previously been made, the most recent being in July 1938, when the new Franco-Turkish Treaty of Friendship was initialled. See also vol. v of this Series, document No. 539 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 4

1941/435222-23

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 31 of March 15

WARSAW, March 16, 1939—3:15 a.m.

Received March 16—8:30 a.m.

Pol. IV 1740.

M. Beck, who had not reacted in any way to the appointment which I had already sought yesterday, asked me to call on him this evening to tell me, with obvious displeasure, and referring to Lipski's lack of contact with the German Foreign Ministry, that unpleasant things had been observed along the Polish frontier<sup>1</sup> during the surprise march-in of German troops. Machine guns had been set up at various points immediately on the frontier and trained on Polish territory. At one point a trench had even been dug. On the Polish side these measures, which appeared like a threat, had been regarded as misunderstood instructions

<sup>1</sup> i.e. with Czecho-Slovakia.

by subordinate authorities, and no counter-measures had been taken. He asked me, however, to acquaint my Government with this matter, and expressed a hope that these measures would be rescinded. I promised to do so.

M. Beck further pointed out that, during the march-in, the demarcation line originally laid down had not been adhered to. As a result, an extremely unpleasant impression had arisen. Fortunately, no incidents had occurred. Objectively speaking, the matter was also unimportant, as the frontier established meanwhile had been accepted. However, at least a communication might have been expected. I replied that the demarcation line, of which I had no exact information, had probably been regarded as settled by frontier delimitation.<sup>2</sup> In any case, there had certainly been no intention of putting Poland out of humour.

I then presented the notification of the Hácha Agreement<sup>3</sup> and, in accordance with oral instructions, explained the German views on the overall situation, emphasizing particularly the German attitude to the question of the Carpatho-Ukraine.<sup>4</sup> When I asked about consideration for Rumanian wishes, the Foreign Minister replied that the matter was at present being negotiated with Polish mediation; he assumed that Rumania would receive both the areas settled by Rumanians and the extreme eastern tip with the strategically important railway. He further mentioned that Czech troops had asked to be transported back across Polish territory.

Regarding the Slovak question, Beck expressed satisfaction with the independence obtained. On receipt of last night's notification,<sup>5</sup> he had immediately announced his recognition and had appointed a *Chargé d'Affaires* who was already on his way to Bratislava. Foreign press reports, attributing to Poland specific designs on Slovakia, were false, and a sharp *démenti* had been ordered. In contrast to the Carpatho-Ukrainian frontier no troops were concentrated on the Slovak frontier.

In conclusion M. Beck said he was grateful for the detailed information given, and expressed the hope that a settlement of the Carpatho-Ukrainian question would also have a favourable effect on German-Polish relations.

MOLTKE

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, chapter 1, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 229.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 32 of Mar. 16 (401/213367) Moltke reported: "The Hungarian Minister told me that after his conversations with Beck he had the impression that the Polish Government would be tactful enough to leave the conquest of the Carpatho-Ukraine to Hungary alone."

"In yesterday's conversation, Beck told me that Poland had no territorial designs on the Carpatho-Ukraine. His statements also give no reason to suppose that Poland wishes an extension of her frontier elsewhere."

<sup>5</sup> See also *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939* (London, H.M. Stationery Office, *in progress*) (hereinafter cited as *British Documents*), Third Series, vol. iv, No. 269.

## No. 5

2050/447264

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 16, 1939.

The State Secretary gave the following instructions to the German Legation in Prague by telephone at 1:12 p.m.

For Ministerialdirektor Gaus, or Counsellor Dr. Kordt.

I would like to suggest that Foreign Minister Chvalkovský instruct the former Czech Missions abroad:

1) to notify the Government to which they were previously accredited that they have given up their function as Czech representatives.

2) to ensure the smooth transfer of the former Czech Mission[s] to the German diplomatic representative on the spot.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 16 in telegram No. 123 sent from Prague at 8:45 p.m. (2050/447285), Ritter and Hencke reported: "The Czech Missions abroad have been instructed by Chvalkovský by telegram today to place themselves under German Missions, to carry out our instructions, and in particular to put all archives at our disposal. Czech Missions are passing on similar instructions to Czech Consulates."

In telegram No. 125 of Mar. 18 (not printed, 2819/548717), the Foreign Ministry informed the Embassy in Paris that, as far as was known, this order had been obeyed by all Czech Missions except those in Washington, London and Paris. The Prague Government were being asked to instruct these Missions also to conform to the order.

## No. 6

1975/438323

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 82 of March 16

BUCHAREST, March 16, 1939—2 p.m.

Received March 16—6:35 p.m.

Pol. IV 1753.

With reference to my telegram No. 79 of March 15.<sup>1</sup>

Poland yesterday advised Rumania to occupy Rumanian villages and railroads in Carpatho-Ukraine. The Minister of the Court<sup>2</sup> and the Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> have told me that the Rumanian Government have declined, because they do not wish to do anything without German consent. They request that their just claim to these territories be not overlooked if, owing to the Hungarian advance, the position in Carpatho-Ukraine is revised in contravention of the Vienna Award.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 2.<sup>2</sup> Ernst Urdarianu.<sup>3</sup> Grigore Gafencu.

As the Rumanian Government's attitude in the matter appears loyal in every way, please consider whether the Foreign Minister can be given an answer which will strengthen his position in the country and will contribute towards pacification in the eastern tip of the Carpathians. Request answer by telegram, if necessary by telephone.

FABRICIUS

## No. 7

1975/438324

### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

BUDAPEST, March 16, 1939—4:30 p.m.

No. 48 of March 16

Received March 16—8:25 p.m.

Pol. IV 1755.

The Foreign Minister told me that Rumania was mobilizing five army corps in all. The Hungarian Army had received orders to eject the Rumanians, should they invade Carpatho-Ukraine. He had requested the Yugoslav and Polish Governments to exert a calming influence on the Rumanian Government so that incidents would be avoided. Hungarian relations with Yugoslavia were at present very friendly as a result of the Yugoslav Government's complete restraint in the Carpatho-Ukraine question. On the other hand, he had rejected in a friendly manner the Polish Foreign Minister's<sup>1</sup> advice to appease Rumania by means of territorial concessions. He would not allow himself to be blackmailed by Rumania. The Rumanian proposal reported yesterday,<sup>2</sup> which meant that Hungary could only have occupied a relatively small part of Carpatho-Ukraine, was unacceptable; but he was ready of his own accord to cede to Rumania, in return for concessions elsewhere, the eastern tip of Carpatho-Ukraine (east of the Theiss) including the railway link from Poland to Rumania, which the Polish Foreign Minister would like to see in Rumanian possession for the purpose of a possible Polish-Rumanian advance against the Soviet Union.

Count Csáky requested that this communication should for the present

<sup>1</sup> Col. Beck.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 42 of Mar. 15 from Budapest (not printed, 1929/437929-30) Erdmannsdorff reported information from Csáky that the Rumanian Government had presented a Note proposing that Hungarian troops should not move east of a line running north from Huszt (Chust). Texts of the Rumanian proposals have not been found in the German archives. In despatch No. 1775 of Mar. 24 (not printed, 1975/438346-48) Fabricius reported that the Hungarian Minister in Bucharest had told him that Gafencu's first proposals had been that Carpatho-Ukraine should, as well as by Hungary, also be occupied by Poland and Rumania; only later had Gafencu spoken of Rumania occupying four villages and the railway connecting Sighet with Poland. See also document No. 29.

be treated as confidential and he would also be (word missing) [?grateful] to us for exerting a calming influence on the Rumanian Government. He added that the Hungarian Army, which had a start of three days as regards mobilization, was strong enough to meet a possible Rumanian attack with success.<sup>3</sup>

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>3</sup> In a further telegram, No. 61 of Mar. 19 (not printed, 1975/438334-35) Erdmannsdorff reported that Csáky had informed him that he had instructed his Minister in Bucharest to ask the Rumanian Government to explain why they were taking such extensive military measures despite the reassuring Hungarian statements. Should he not obtain a satisfactory answer within 48 hours, Hungary would order general mobilization.

## No. 8

1969/437926

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

BERLIN, March 16, 1939—6 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 1714.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 79 of March 15.<sup>1</sup>

Please point out to the Rumanian Government that all legal agreements made at Munich and Vienna<sup>2</sup> have been superseded by the latest events, as these agreements were based on the concept that the entire Czecho-Slovak territory was bounded by one common frontier. After the centre section broke away through the Slovak declaration of independence,<sup>3</sup> an entirely new situation arose. What inferences are to be drawn from this situation cannot as yet be assessed. We have not seen fit to protest against the Hungarian advance.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See vol II of this Series, document No. 675, and vol. IV, document No. 99.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 212.

<sup>4</sup> In the first draft of this telegram (1969/437928), a second paragraph read: "The Reich Government do not intend to play an active part in the question of the future of Carpatho-Ukraine. They are rather of the opinion that it is for the States interested in this territory to discuss the future of Carpatho-Ukraine." This was deleted and the present two concluding sentences substituted in Heinburg's handwriting.

<sup>5</sup> A minute on this document states that copies of this telegram were sent to the Missions at London, Paris, Rome, Warsaw, Moscow, Ankara, Tokyo, Washington, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, The Hague, Budapest, Belgrade, Stockholm and Copenhagen, for guidance on language to be held.

## No. 9

7491/E540478

*Circular of the Director of the Political Department*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 16, 1939—6:10 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 1728.<sup>2</sup>

For information only.

On the instructions of his Government, the British Ambassador<sup>3</sup> here transmitted on March 15 a written communication, in the form of a private letter to the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> in which it was explained that the British Government did not wish to intervene more than was necessary in a matter in which other Governments were more directly involved than they themselves were. Nevertheless, as the German Government would undoubtedly understand, they were very apprehensive as to whether all the efforts to re-establish confidence and to bring about a *détente* would be successful. To these efforts the British Government, as presumably the German Government also, attached importance, in view of the commencement of the economic negotiations.<sup>4</sup> From this point of view the British Government would deplore any action in Central Europe which might cause a setback to the increasing general confidence upon which any improvement of the economic position depended.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions at London, Paris, Rome, Warsaw, Moscow, Ankara, Tokyo, Washington, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, The Hague, Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade, Stockholm and Copenhagen.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 234. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. IV, document No. 247.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Neville Henderson.

<sup>4</sup> Discussions were in progress at Düsseldorf between representatives of the Reichsgruppe Industrie and of the Federation of British Industries. See vol. IV of this Series document No. 331.

## No. 10

2002/442276

*Circular of the State Secretary*

Telegram (en clair)

BERLIN, March 16, 1939—11:58 p.m.  
Pol. IV 1750.

To all Diplomatic Missions.

The Slovak Minister President, Tiso, has transmitted the following request to the Führer by telegram:

"With full trust in you, the Führer and Chancellor of the Greater

German Reich, the Slovak State places itself under your protection. The Slovak State asks you to take over this protection. Signed: Tiso."

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The Führer has sent this reply:

"I acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of yesterday and hereby take over the protection of the Slovak State. Signed: Adolf Hitler."

Further instructions in this connection, especially regarding notification, are reserved.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 11

7482/E540403

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 16, 1939.

e.o.W II 1756.

Subject: Repercussions of the occupation of Czechia on the economic discussions with Britain and France.

On March 15, the British Government cancelled the visit to Berlin of the Ministers Stanley and Hudson as being "inopportune in the present circumstances".<sup>1</sup> The conversations between German and British industrial representatives in Düsseldorf are being continued until the evening of March 16, by which time they were to have been concluded in any case according to the intended programme. The British industrial representatives are then returning to England from Düsseldorf, without previously coming on to Berlin, as the dinner planned for Minister Stanley in Berlin is not taking place.<sup>2</sup> The industrial conversations went off satisfactorily; agreements were not to be expected yet. The conversations between the various industrial groups are to be continued on dates yet to be fixed. The representatives of the two controlling organisations will meet again in June, and for this the British have issued invitations to go to London.

Alphand, the chief French negotiator, returned to Paris unexpectedly this morning. The five members of his delegation are still here and are awaiting instructions, but have declined to attend the negotiations set for today. Alphand had intended to stay here until about the middle of next week in order to continue the discussions on a travel agreement and on the various plans for intensifying German-French economic cooperation. Alphand sent his apologies to me through the French

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 330.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 331.

Commercial Attaché<sup>3</sup> here for having had to leave suddenly on instructions from Gentin, the Minister for Trade, without having the opportunity to say goodbye. The Commercial Attaché gave no reason for his departure. He thought that, as the delegation had remained here, perhaps Alphand would also return in order to continue the negotiations.<sup>4</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>3</sup> J. Lefeuve.

<sup>4</sup> In a despatch of Mar. 20 (7482/E540405) the Foreign Ministry informed the Embassy in France: "M. Alphand made a surprise return to Paris on Mar. 16. At first the delegation remained in Berlin to await more detailed instructions from Paris. Negotiations were however not continued. The last member of the French delegation finally left Berlin during the evening of Mar. 17, so that negotiations have been broken off. More detailed information regarding the reasons for departure has not reached us from the French delegation."

In telegram No. 165 of Mar. 21 (not printed, 2467/517349-50), the Embassy in France communicated the text of a statement in the French press in which the annexation of Czecho-Slovakia was given as the reason for breaking off the negotiations. The recently signed economic agreement between France and Czecho-Slovakia, which was to have come into force on Apr. 1, was regarded as having lapsed.

## No. 12

2002/442278

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 36 of March 16

WARSAW, March 17, 1939—4:50 a.m.

Received March 17—9:55 a.m.

Pol. IV 1775.

The Under Secretary of State, Arciszewski, asked me to call on him this evening and stated that M. Beck had unfortunately been prevented from receiving me owing to a meeting of Ministers but that he wished to tell me that he would be very grateful if information could be obtained from Berlin as to the significance of the promise given for the protection of Slovakia.<sup>1</sup> No clear picture could be formed here of the genesis and import of this promise; the less so, indeed, as the Polish side had already unofficially signified their readiness for a frontier guarantee, and from Hungary, too, no danger threatened.

I replied that it did not seem to me advisable to make enquiries in Berlin at this stage. If the exchange of telegrams, which had only just become known here, was confirmed, I would certainly receive instructions in the near future which would put me in a position to give a more detailed explanation of the matter. Arciszewski again repeated his request, referring to the great interest which M. Beck took in the matter.

As was to be expected, the announcement of the exchange of telegrams has caused considerable nervousness here which has also found

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 10.



expression in renewed anti-German street demonstrations. In order to bolster up the position of M. Beck, who is apparently under strong pressure from the military element, it seems advisable that he should be supplied with information calculated to lessen as far as possible fears of a far-reaching infringement of Slovak independence and the danger of military pressure on Poland from Slovakia.

MOLTKE

## No. 13

1975/438325

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, March 17, 1939—3:45 p.m.

No. 86

zu Pol. IV 1753,<sup>1</sup> 1755.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 82 of [March] 16.<sup>1</sup>

Budapest Legation telegraphs:

[Here follows the full text of document No. 7]

End of telegram from Budapest.

Please conduct conversation with Foreign Minister on the following lines:

We consider the reserve hitherto maintained by Rumania to be prudent and are of the opinion that Rumanian interests would best be served by avoidance of violent measures. We continue to be interested in a final peaceful settlement of the Carpatho-Ukrainian question between Hungary and Rumania but do not intend, at any rate at the moment, to adopt the role of mediator, as we are convinced that a direct settlement is entirely feasible. Budapest has received the same instructions.<sup>3</sup>

Please conduct conversation in such a way that it cannot be construed as an encouragement of far-reaching Rumanian wishes.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 7.

<sup>3</sup> On the same date the text of document No. 6 and of the instructions here printed were telegraphed to Budapest as telegram No. 70 (1975/438326).

<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 17 (2050/447289), Woermann recorded: "I informed the Hungarian Minister today about the instructions sent to Bucharest and Budapest on the Carpatho-Ukraine question, and emphasized that we do not, at the moment, wish to accept the role of mediators or to encourage Rumania to make far-reaching demands. I mentioned that, according to our information, the Hungarian Government were willing to cede to Rumania the most eastern tip of the Carpatho-Ukraine, including the railway line through the Theiss Valley, and presumably also a few villages east of Chust, in return for concessions, and I asked M. Sztójay what concessions they had in mind. The Minister said Hungary had no interest in the eastern tip of the Carpatho-Ukraine and would propose the cession of predominantly Hungarian villages along the present Hungaro-Rumanian frontier instead. He assumed it was mainly a question of the Sztomar (Szatmárnemeti) area. As there were 1,700,000 Hungarians living in Rumania, the Hungarian Government had no cause to give up Carpatho-Ukraine territory to Rumania without compensation." Woermann further enquired about reports of Hungarian troops crossing the Rumanian frontier, but Sztójay had no definite information.

## No. 14

6402/E474883

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 87 of March 17

WASHINGTON, March 17, 1939—8:28 p.m.

Received March 18—5:15 a.m.

W VIII a 600.

With reference to your telegram No. 80 of March 17.<sup>1</sup>

1. I have delivered to Welles the prescribed Note<sup>2</sup> in which the United States Government are notified of the establishment of the Protectorate, and have in addition given the oral explanations as directed. Welles received these without comment.

2. However, he took the opportunity of informing me that the United States Government had determined, after a thorough examination of the case, to impose "countervailing duties"<sup>3</sup> on imports from Germany at the earliest possible moment, pursuant to Article 303 of the Tariff Act,<sup>4</sup> and he asked me to transmit this information to my Government. The American Government were in possession of proofs that German exports were heavily subsidized, and therefore felt themselves justified in imposing this measure. When I questioned him on the matter, Welles stated that "countervailing duties" would be imposed within the next 48 hours. The repercussions of the events of the last few days have thus led to removal of the State Department's opposition to the measure proposed by the Treasury (see my telegram No. 75 of March 13).<sup>5</sup>

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2050/447306-07); this was a circular to all Missions stating that all Czecho-Slovak consular duties had passed to Germany; only in extremely urgent cases were reliable Czecho-Slovak officials to be engaged for the time being.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 242, and also document No. 50 in this volume, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> Of 1930. Section 303 rendered liable to additional (countervailing) duties, dutiable imports into the U.S.A. if their production or export was subsidized in their country of origin.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (2000/442087-88). In this telegram Thomsen reported that a party of three experts from the Treasury and Justice Departments had left New York on Mar. 10 for Germany via France on a secret mission to investigate German currency measures, commercial barter methods and handling of blocked accounts. It was believed that a final decision as to the nature of American retaliatory measures—countervailing duties or embargo on German imports—would be based on the report of this party. The evidence gathered was allegedly to be used to overcome certain objections by the Secretary of State to the retaliatory measures favoured by the Treasury and the Justice Departments.

## No. 15

2050/447298-300

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST SECRET

ROME, March 17, 1939—11:30 p.m.

URGENT

Received March 18—2:20 a.m.

No. 100 of March 17

For the Foreign Minister.

Count Ciano asked me to call on him this evening in order to inform me of the following on the instructions of the Duce,<sup>1</sup> with the request to report it immediately to the Reich [Foreign] Minister and also to the Führer and Chancellor:

He wished to confirm once again<sup>2</sup> that our action over the liquidation of Czecho-Slovakia had met with unreserved approval here as was also shown by the press here, even though, as he hinted for the first time, there had been no knowledge here of our latest intentions. The settlement was natural and logical and he, personally, was in complete agreement with it. Of course, it had resulted in profoundly agitating public opinion throughout the world, and public opinion here had not been unaffected, even though this was of itself insignificant as here the will of the Duce alone was authoritative. However, the Duce felt himself obliged to draw attention to certain rumours which were also to be found in the press and which, without causing him disquiet, imposed on him the duty, precisely because of his firmly established friendship towards us—indeed, the Axis formed the basis of Italy's entire foreign policy—and precisely because of the complete frankness advisable between friends, to make a plain statement now, even though he did not consider the rumours had any foundation.

With a prolixity and tortuousness not usual to him, Ciano explained his long introduction by the fact that people were saying—and these rumours also emanated from Zagreb—that Maček intended, under the influence of the most recent events, to follow in the tracks of Hácha and Tiso, and set up Croat autonomy under a German protectorate. It was certain that the dissolution of Czechia had given the autonomy movement in Croatia the most powerful impetus. In such a state of affairs the Duce was anxious to allow no doubt to arise regarding the fact that,

<sup>1</sup> For Ciano's account of this interview see Galeazzo Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe* (Milan, 1948) pp. 418-419. See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of Mar. 17, 1939. (These Diaries have been published in Italian as Galeazzo Ciano, *Diario, 1939-1943* (2 vols., Milan and Rome, 1946); and *Diario 1937-38* (Bologna, 1948); in French as Comte Galeazzo Ciano, *Journal Politique, 1939-43* (2 vols., Neuchâtel and Paris, 1946) and *Journal Politique, 1937-38* (Paris, 1949); in English as *The Ciano Diaries, 1939-43*, ed. Hugh Gibson (New York, 1946) and *Ciano's Diary, 1939-1943*, ed. Malcolm Muggeridge (London, 1947) and *Ciano's Diary, 1937-1938* (London, 1952). As the texts of these four publications differ considerably in places, reference is here made to entries by dates rather than by page numbers.)

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 463.

even though Italy's *désintéressement* in the fate of Czechia had been, and remained complete, her attitude was completely different towards the Croat question which affected vital interests of the country. Italy herself had supported the Croat movement for autonomy before the settlement with Yugoslavia; that was in the past. Today, on the contrary, her interest was in a strong Yugoslavia. The Croat question affected the Adriatic, and hence the Mediterranean, which the Duce considered as much an Italian sea, as he regarded the Baltic as a purely German sea, in which judgement, moreover, he was at one with the Führer and Chancellor who had expressed himself clearly in this sense.<sup>3</sup> Nothing had changed in his attitude. An action which did not take account of this attitude would oblige Italy to react accordingly. The Duce was far from accepting the rumours in circulation as well founded. However, he considered it right and proper—precisely because of his close friendship with the Führer and Chancellor—to leave no doubt that the Croat question was for him a *noli me tangere*.

In answer to my precise question as to his sources and their value, Ciano referred to certain unspecified reports and also to press reports.

I replied that, in accordance with his wishes, I would immediately report the substance of his observations but that, for the rest, I did not see the slightest indication that any Croat aspirations to the detriment of a strong Yugoslavia which we also desired, had any prospects of success with us. Moreover, he had himself already referred to the Führer and Chancellor's clear statements about the Mediterranean. Ciano thereupon repeated once again that neither he nor the Duce took it for granted that the rumours were true; the Duce, however, wished to take the precaution of stating that Italy's attitude in the Czech question did not warrant the assumption that a similar *désintéressement* was conceivable with regard to the Croat question also.

Ciano finally added that certain press reports regarding Italy's alleged plans in respect of Albania were quite without foundation. Ciano made these statements in a markedly friendly and cordial manner.

MACKENSEN

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 86, footnote 7.

## No. 16

483/231356

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 234

BERLIN, March 17, 1939.

The British Ambassador took leave of me today before going to London tomorrow to report.<sup>1</sup> He informed me of the feeling which

<sup>1</sup> See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 308, footnote 1.

was developing in London as a result of the present solution of the Czecho-Slovak question, and he sounded me for arguments which he could give Chamberlain for use against the latter's political opposition at home.

I attempted to make it clear to Henderson, with reference to developments of the last six months, how we had been in a fair way towards coming to an arrangement with Prague which would have satisfied the requirements of both sides. The prerequisite for this, however—the disappearance of the Beneš spirit—was lacking more and more as time went on. On the contrary, Czech hopes, obviously encouraged from outside and apparently from America in particular, of a European war and of the resurgence of their country on a larger scale had increased. This had finally created a situation in which the outward manifestation, that is, Tiso's dismissal by Prague,<sup>2</sup> had sufficed to set the ball rolling. The present development was partly to be ascribed to the Czech people themselves, and partly to their ill-advised friends abroad.

Wishes which Henderson expressed regarding certain persons who had taken refuge in the British Legation in Prague are being dealt with elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

Henderson could as yet make no statement regarding his return to Berlin.

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 186.

<sup>3</sup> On Mar. 17, Woermann telegraphed to Ritter in Prague (not printed, 350/202316-17) that the British Embassy in Berlin had semi-officially requested safe conduct for certain British and non-British subjects who were being given asylum in the British Legation in Prague. Weizsäcker had suggested to Henderson that Newton, who could no longer act officially as British Minister, should discuss the matter privately with Ritter. On Mar. 18, the Legation in Prague reported, in telegram No. 132 (not printed, 350/202286), that Ritter had promised Newton safe conduct for British subjects and sympathetic consideration for the cases of non-British subjects.

<sup>4</sup> For an addition to this record made later by Weizsäcker, see document No. 36.

## No. 17

5558/E305956-57

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 17, 1939.

W 409g.

Subject: Arms credit for Bulgaria.<sup>1</sup>

I informed the Bulgarian Minister<sup>2</sup> today that the Reich Government were prepared in principle to increase by about 20 million RM the credit granted to Bulgaria for arms to the value of 30 million RM.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See also vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 314 and 315.

<sup>2</sup> Col. Parvan Draganov.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 181.

It was not possible to increase it by 45 million as the Bulgarian Government had requested, since our own capacity for delivery was not sufficient for this. The increase by about 20 million RM was dependent on two conditions:

a) the possibility of raising funds for effecting the repayment instalments should be clearly laid down in the Bulgarian budget, for which we were awaiting more precise data from the Bulgarian negotiators.

b) the possibility of transferring the repayment instalments by means of the export of Bulgarian goods to Germany should be clearly laid down, and in particular the possibility of delivering a sufficient percentage in goods representing [for Germany] foreign exchange, principally ores, should be guaranteed. If this is not possible from the mines already in production, then a clause would have to be inserted to the effect that the yield from new mines would also be used for the repayment of deliveries up to an agreed percentage of the repayment instalments.

The Minister described the two conditions as easy to comply with; he thought that the Bulgarian delegation might arrive here at the beginning of next week for the negotiations with Minister Clodius.

He was very disappointed at the increase being limited to about 20 million RM. He described this as too little and strongly emphasized that precisely in the present state of affairs it was important to bring Bulgarian armaments up to the proposed maximum with the greatest possible speed. He drew attention to the fact that our productive capacity had been considerably increased by the annexation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and would now without doubt be adequate for supplying also the further 45 million RM worth requested by Bulgaria in even less time than the period envisaged hitherto. In certain circumstances even immediate delivery to Bulgaria from Czech Army stocks could be contemplated.

I replied that I was only authorized to promise him the increase of 20 million RM. This decision had indeed been made by the Reich Government before the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia was taken over. It was in the light of the new situation created by this that his fresh suggestions based thereon would be studied. The Minister requested that this should be done as quickly as possible so that its result would be available in time for the negotiations with the Bulgarian delegation.<sup>4</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>4</sup> This memorandum was sent to the Legation at Sofia under cover of a despatch of Mar. 20 (not printed, 5558/E395958) signed by Moraht, Senior Counsellor in the Economic Policy Department.

## No. 18

2002/442279

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland*

Telegram

No. 60 of March 17

BERLIN, March 18, 1939—12:10 a.m.

[Received March 18—3:43 a.m.]<sup>1</sup>[zu] Pol. IV 1775.<sup>2</sup>

Instructions on language to be held. With reference to your telegram No. 36 of March 16.<sup>2</sup>

During the few hours which have elapsed since the exchange of telegrams between the Führer and Tiso,<sup>3</sup> it has not been possible to reach a settlement on the import of the promise made about the protection of Slovakia. It looks as if the status of Slovakia will be differentiated from that of Czechia. The wording of the text itself indicates that it is not intended to take such far-reaching measures as in the case of Czechia. Further instructions follow.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Inserted from the copy filed in the Warsaw Embassy (2892/565569).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 12.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 10.

## No. 19

427/218204

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 237

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

The British Ambassador has just rung me up (1 p.m.) to ask for an interview with me to deliver a Note of protest. He stated that the Note would contain the assertion that our action in Czecho-Slovakia was devoid of legal basis.

I told Henderson that, in such circumstances, I could expect no result from his visit. A conversation between him and me on the matter would undoubtedly achieve no improvement, for I could only advise him to propose to his Government that they should reconsider the matter, and make no representation to us at all.

As Henderson insisted on his visit, and maintained that he had strict instructions<sup>1</sup> from his Government regarding the presentation of a Note, I told him that what he intended doing was up to him. In my opinion a conversation between him and me would serve no useful purpose because my view of the matter was quite unequivocal.

<sup>1</sup> For the text of these instructions see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 308, and for Sir Neville Henderson's account of their execution see *ibid.*, No. 401.

The Ambassador then postponed his decision as to whether he would, after all, still see me this afternoon, or would communicate by other means, i.e., in writing.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 20

F12/401-397

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 238

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

At his request the French Ambassador called on me at one o'clock this afternoon.<sup>1</sup> He immediately laid a Note on the table requesting me to read it.

Without taking up the Note, I asked the Ambassador what it concerned. M. Coulondre replied that the Note contained a protest regarding our action against Czecho-Slovakia.

I immediately replaced the Note in its envelope and thrust it back at the Ambassador with the remark that I categorically refused to accept from him any protest regarding the Czecho-Slovak affair. Nor would I take note of the communication and I would advise M. Coulondre from the start to urge his Government to revise their draft once more.

The Ambassador immediately replied that his Government had examined the matter most thoroughly and had decided on this step, which had obviously been agreed upon with the British Government. He was not in a position to urge his Government to revise their point of view. When the Ambassador then wished to argue the matter in detail, contesting the legal basis of our course of action, and characterizing it as a breach of the Munich Agreement and also contrary to the Agreement of December 6, 1938,<sup>2</sup> I replied somewhat as follows:

I did not wish to enter into a discussion on this matter with the Ambassador at all. From the legal point of view there existed a Declaration which had come about between the Führer and the President of the Czecho-Slovak State. The Czech President had at his own wish come to Berlin and had then immediately declared to the Reich Foreign Minister that he wished to place the fate of his country in the Führer's hands. I could not imagine that the French Government were more Catholic than the Pope and intended meddling in things which had been duly settled between Berlin and Prague. Moreover, from the political point of view, the territory in question was one regarding which M.

<sup>1</sup> For M. Coulondre's account of the interview see Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, *Documents Diplomatiques 1938-1939, Pièces relatives aux événements et aux négociations qui ont précédé l'ouverture des hostilités entre l'Allemagne d'une part, la Pologne, la Grande-Bretagne et la France d'autre part* (Paris, 1939) (hereinafter cited as the *French Yellow Book*), No. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 369.



Bonnet himself, as was well known, had stated his *désintéressement* to the Reich Foreign Minister at the beginning of December.<sup>3</sup> But for this step the Agreement of December 6, 1938 would not have taken place at all. A *démarche* such as the one contemplated by M. Coulondre, would violate and render completely meaningless the Agreement of December 6, for how could a protest based on it be delivered without knowledge of the facts of the case. If the French Government were to persist in the error which they apparently now intended to commit, I must fear that the Agreement of December 6 would become null and void. I therefore believed that the Ambassador was about to carry out an instruction of his Government which the latter would subsequently very much regret. To the end the Ambassador refused to take back his Note, which was lying on my table, asking what would become of German-French relations if we no longer accepted official Notes delivered by their representatives. I for my part stated that I refused to take cognizance of this paper; if it remained lying between us I would regard it as transmitted to us through the post.

The essential substance of the Note is:

- a formal protest against our measures in Czecho-Slovakia;
- the assertion that the letter and spirit of the Munich Agreement have been flagrantly violated;
- the assertion that the new state of affairs in Czecho-Slovakia has been forced on its Government and finally,
- the declaration that the French Government could not recognize the new position in Czecho-Slovakia as legal.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> The German account of the Bonnet-Ribbentrop conversation of Dec. 6 is printed in vol. iv of this Series, document No. 370; this Memorandum is unsigned but the word "Minister" appears at the foot. Since the publication of vol. iv, a letter from Bräuer, Counsellor of the Embassy in Paris (7563/E542308-09), has been found bearing on this document. The letter reads as follows:

PARIS, December 17, 1938.

DEAR HERR WOERMANN:

The discussions which Reich Minister von Ribbentrop had on December 6 have been made the subject of a memorandum by Minister Schmidt, which Count Welczek and I were able to glance through here. However, we have not been able to keep a copy of the memorandum here because it had not yet been approved by Herr von Ribbentrop. What I wanted to ask you now was whether you would let the Embassy have a copy of the final version. This is all the more important as the discussions are mentioned now and again by the French, so that the account of the discussions must be at hand for reference.

I thank you very much in advance for your trouble, and take this opportunity of sending you my most cordial wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

I remain, with best wishes, and Heil Hitler,

Yours ever,

BRÄUER

This letter was entered as Pol. II 3019g on Dec. 22, 1938. It bears Weizsäcker's initials dated Dec. 19, and also a marginal note by Woermann of the same date:—"via St. S. to Foreign Minister's Secretariat: this can presumably be done."

Ribbentrop agreed to Bräuer's request (not printed, 7563/E542310), and a copy of the documents printed in vol. iv of this Series as documents Nos. 370 and 372 was sent to Paris (7563/E542311).

For the account of this conversation given at the time by Bonnet to the British Ambassador in Paris, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. III, Nos. 404, 405 and 407.

[Enclosure]<sup>4</sup>

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

By a letter dated March 15, 1939,<sup>5</sup> His Excellency the German Ambassador, acting on instructions from his Government, has handed to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Republic the text of an agreement reached during the night of March 14-15 between the Führer and Chancellor and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich on the one side and the President and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czecho-Slovak Republic on the other side.

In the same communication, it was announced that German troops crossed the Czech frontier at 6 o'clock in the morning and that all measures had been taken to avoid resistance and bloodshed and to allow the occupation and pacification of the territory to take place in a quiet and orderly way.

The French Ambassador has the honour to convey to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich the formal protest made by the Government of the Republic against the measure referred to in Count von Welczeck's communication.

The Government of the Republic consider themselves, through the action taken against Czecho-Slovakia by the German Government, confronted with a flagrant violation of both the letter and the spirit of the Agreement signed in Munich on September 29, 1938.

The circumstances in which the Treaty of March 15 was imposed on the leaders of the Czecho-Slovak Republic could not, in the view of the Government of the French Republic, legalize the position laid down in this Treaty.

The French Ambassador has the honour to inform His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Reich that the Government of the Republic cannot in the circumstances recognize the legality of the new situation brought about in Czecho-Slovakia by the action of the Reich.

<sup>4</sup> Translated from the original French, for which see the *French Yellow Book*, No. 76.

<sup>5</sup> The text of this letter of Mar. 15 is given in the *French Yellow Book*, No. 69. See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 245.

## No. 21

5570/E398815

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 53 of March 18

BELGRADE, March 18, 1939—1:25 p.m.

Received March 18—4:35 p.m.

W 407 39 g.

With reference to your despatch W 290g of February 27.<sup>1</sup>

Regarding the present state of the negotiations concerning the big armaments deal, von Schönebeck, the Air Attaché, who returned today,

<sup>1</sup> See vol. V of this Series, document No. 307.

told me that, according to information telephoned to him from Berlin by Consul-General Neuhausen, interested German aircraft firms have now been authorized to submit tenders within the limits of the afore-said credit to the competent Yugoslav authorities.

Herr Schönebeck has also got the definite impression that of late the greatest importance is attached on the Yugoslav side to the speediest possible conclusion.

HEEREN

## No. 22

2771/536874-75

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, March 18, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

No. 154 of March 18

Received March 18—1:45 p.m.

I. The French Government have reacted to the events in the former Czecho-Slovakia by introducing a bill to give the Government full powers to take all necessary measures for national defence by November 30, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

The reasons given by Daladier for the bill in yesterday's session of the Chamber underlined the gravity of the situation without any attack on Germany. He emphasized the necessity of countering the totalitarian States, whose successes are achieved by speed and secrecy, with similar weapons.

It is expected that the bill will be passed by the Chamber today and by the Senate tomorrow.

II. According to the debate in the Chamber—admittedly not yet concluded—and to other information available here, the political situation appears to be as follows:

1) France will, in effect, do nothing about the situation created by German action in Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia.

2) German action has, however, caused indignation and acute anxiety in the widest circles—even among "the men of Munich"—regarding the future development of European politics.

a) Indignation, because German measures are regarded as a manifestation of desire for conquest. The Führer is held to have violated the right of self-determination of peoples which he repeatedly emphasized during the *Anschluss* of Austria and the

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> A single-clause bill conferring special powers on the French Government was passed by the Chamber of Deputies on Mar. 18 and by the Senate on Mar. 19, when it was promulgated as law by the President of the Republic. The terms of this law were: "The Government are authorized, up to November 30, 1939, to take by decrees deliberated in the Council of Ministers the measures necessary for the defence of the country. These decrees will be submitted for ratification to the Chambers before December 31, 1939." (See *Journal Officiel de la République Française*, Mar. 20, 1939, p. 3646.)

Sudetenland in justification of the German claims; he is held to have also disregarded his former declarations, especially that of Germany having no more territorial claims in Europe, and to be ignoring the Munich Agreement as well as the German-French Declaration of December 6, 1938. In these circumstances it is impossible to retain any confidence whatsoever in German policy.

b) Acute anxiety, because German war-potential has vastly increased and further *coups* in East and Central Europe are feared, but chiefly because it is to be expected that Italy—not to be always lagging behind her German partner—will push her claims more insistently than ever, and can reckon on German support in this connection.

3) The following demands are made for future French policy:

a) rearmament is to be promoted with the greatest energy and by all available means,

b) Anglo-French military cooperation is to be still closer,

c) a re-examination of the Munich policy of understanding with Germany is to be undertaken and possibly a re-assessment of the alliances with Poland and Russia is to be aimed at,

d) but in no circumstances should resistance to the Italian claims be abated.

III. The Government—particularly Daladier, but above all, Bonnet, who are held responsible for the Munich Agreement—are exposed to violent attacks. The Left is attacking the emergency powers, which they regard as a threat to constitutional liberties and social achievements, as well as a possible preliminary step towards an authoritarian régime. A Government crisis, which in the present situation must entail extreme danger and extensive weakening of French prestige throughout the world, will, however, according to the view prevailing today, be avoided.

The ratio of votes by which the committee of the Chamber has accepted the bill for emergency powers (26 votes for, 17 votes against) probably corresponds to the attitude of the Chamber.

WELCZEK

## No. 23

1625/383361

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 75 of March 18

LONDON, March 18, 1939—1:47 p.m.

Received March 18—4:35 p.m.

Pol. II 801.

Chamberlain's speech of yesterday<sup>1</sup> is to be traced to a double motive:

<sup>1</sup> At Birmingham on Mar. 17. For the text of this speech see *Documents Concerning German-Polish Relations and the Outbreak of Hostilities Between Great Britain and Germany on September 3, 1939*, Cmd. 6106, (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1939) (hereinafter cited as *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106), No. 9.

- 1) to strengthen his own position which was being attacked on the grounds that his policy had been shipwrecked,
- 2) to give expression to the very considerable exacerbation of feelings here.

Objectively speaking, the speech means that though Chamberlain is keeping to his former aim of the pacification of Europe by peaceful means, he is adopting, for the achievement of this aim, the bolder front proposed by Halifax: a stronger attitude towards Germany as well as an attempt to form a bloc of Powers.

It should further be stressed that Chamberlain, in contrast to the previous British attitude, emphasizes the continuance of British interest in eastern Europe. This is said to have come about at the instance of France.

During the week-end most Members of Parliament will go to their constituencies in order to ascertain the feelings of their electorate. The result of these impressions will have an important bearing on the future attitude of political public opinion here.

In today's press a report, alleged to have originated from government circles in Bucharest, is given great prominence and is being exploited for propaganda purposes. According to this report, the German Government have asked Rumania to cease building up her own industry, and to direct the whole of her exports to Germany in return for a guarantee of Rumania's independence. Please telegraph instructions.

DIRKSEN

## No. 24

4992/E281723

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 90 of March 18

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1939—2:45 p.m.

Received March 18—11:30 p.m.

W VIII a 609.

With reference to your telegram No. 84 of March 18.<sup>1</sup>

In considering the German counter-measures to the American "countervailing duties",<sup>2</sup> it seems worthy of note that the Secretary of Agriculture, speaking in confidence to a delegate of the Cotton Standard Conference, characterized the cotton situation in the United States as a threat to internal political and economic stability and admitted that

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 27.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

the Government were helpless when confronted with the problem of disposing of the eleven million bales of cotton held as collateral.

German measures against imports of American cotton would therefore strike American economy at a very sensitive spot.

THOMSEN

## No. 25

2050/447321

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

Telephoned instruction (3:00 p.m.)  
to Ambassador von Dirksen, London.

The German Government have heard that Henderson, the British Ambassador here, has been summoned to London to report. According to the speculations made about this fact by the press and among the public generally, there obviously exists a significant connection between these instructions to Henderson and the present German action in Czechia. Please ask the British Government for an explanation as to their intentions in announcing Henderson's summons to London in this manner. The form of the announcement<sup>1</sup> is felt by us to be unfriendly.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 18 the British press reported that the Ambassador in Berlin had been called home "to report" by the British Government as a sign of their displeasure and distrust after the German invasion.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 18 (not printed, 2050/447322) Weizsäcker recorded that Dirksen had telephoned the result of his talk with Halifax, who had informed him that the duration of Henderson's stay in London would depend on the effect of his report to the Cabinet and on the subsequent course of events. (See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 417.) In a further memorandum of Mar. 18 (not printed, 2050/447323), Weizsäcker recorded that he had telephoned Dirksen again that evening, conveying to him Ribbentrop's instructions to return to Berlin to report either that same day or the day after. In a memorandum, St.S. No. 249 of Mar. 20 (not printed, 2050/447335), Weizsäcker recorded that in consequence of the recall of the French Ambassador for consultations, he had, on Ribbentrop's instructions, telephoned requesting Welzcek to return for consultations.

## No. 26

433/231361-62

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 243

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

At 4:30 this afternoon, the British Ambassador had the enclosed Note transmitted,<sup>1</sup> the content of which is similar to the French Note of this morning,<sup>2</sup> but is formulated in terms slightly less precise. It lacks the express statement that the British Government could not recognize the newly created status in Czechia as legal. Rather, this status is characterized as having no legal basis and is made the subject of a protest.

The text of the note is appended.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 401.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 20, enclosure.

[Enclosure]

Copy

British Embassy, BERLIN—March 18, 1939.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: I have the honour to inform Your Excellency, under instructions from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom desire to make it plain to the German Government that they cannot but regard the events of the past few days as a complete repudiation of the Munich Agreement and as a denial of the spirit in which the negotiators of that Agreement bound themselves to cooperate for a peaceful settlement.<sup>3</sup>

I am instructed to add that His Majesty's Government must also take this occasion to protest against the changes effected in Czechoslovakia by German military actions which are in their view devoid of any basis of legality.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

NEVILLE HENDERSON

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Munich Agreement on Sept. 29, 1938 (vol. II of this Series, document No. 675), and the Anglo-German Declaration (*ibid.*, No. 676) referred to by Chamberlain in his Birmingham speech (see *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 9) on Mar. 17, 1939, when he said:

"Surely, as a joint signatory of the Munich Agreement, I was entitled, if Herr Hitler thought it ought to be undone, to that consultation which is provided for in the Munich Declaration. Instead of that he has taken the law into his own hands."

On Mar. 24, Selzam, in despatch No. A 1209 (1625/388420) from London, reported: "In the House of Commons sitting on Mar. 23, the member Henderson asked the Prime Minister: 'What representations have been made by the British Ambassador in Berlin

## No. 27

4992/3281722

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the  
Embassy in the United States*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 84BERLIN, March 18, 1939—6:15 p.m.  
zu W VIII a 600.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor Davidsen.

With reference to your telegram 87.<sup>1</sup>

You should energetically protest to the United States Government orally against the measure planned. It is not correct that German exports are subsidized within the meaning of Article 303. We therefore request information as to what evidence is available to the American Government for their assertion to the contrary so that we, too, can adduce detailed proof in reply. Request them to refrain from taking the proposed measure until this issue is cleared up. Report by telegram on what you have done and reception there of steps taken.<sup>2</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 14.<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Text agreed with the Ministry of Economics. D[avidsen]."

on behalf of His Majesty's Government to the German Government as a result of the failure of the German Government to consult with His Majesty's Government on recent developments in relation to Czecho-Slovakia, as promised by Herr Hitler in the Anglo-German Declaration, signed at Munich on 29th September, 1938?" [Quotation in English in the original.]

"The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Butler, replied as follows: 'I am not aware that the communiqué in question contained such a statement. The second part of the question does not therefore arise.'" [Quotation in English in the original.]

On the same day Kordt, in telegram No. 92 (1625/388399), commented as follows:

"Following upon report A 1209 of March 24, and with reference to Butler's statement in the House of Commons, see *Hansard* of March 23, vol. 345, No. 71, column 1476 [*sic*]. Butler's reply to Henderson's question can only be interpreted as meaning that the British Government's standpoint is that German action in the Czecho-Slovak question does not constitute a breach of the agreement to consult contained in the German-British Declaration of September 29, 1938."

The written reply by Butler quoted in Selzam's despatch and commented on by Kordt was not in fact given to Arthur Henderson's question of Mar. 23, which referred to the Anglo-German Declaration (see *Parliamentary Debates*, Fifth Series, *House of Commons* [hereinafter cited as *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*], vol. 345, col. 1470), but on Mar. 20 to a different question by Arthur Henderson concerning the official German communiqué issued to the foreign press in Berlin on Mar. 11 (see *ibid.*, col. 926).



## No. 28

533/239012

*The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 35 of March 17

ROME (Vatican), March 18, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received March 18—6:25 p.m.

For the State Secretary personally.

With reference to my telegram No. 29 of March 11.<sup>2</sup>

The Pope has intimated to me that the Führer was the first Head of State whom he notified of his election as Pope; he had also broken with the usual protocol when he not only signed, as was customary, the letter drawn up in Latin, but also the German draft, which was not to be considered as a mere translation.<sup>3</sup> He had also wished by these means to intimate his sympathetic attitude to Germany and his desire for peace.

The new Cardinal Secretary of State, Maglione, to whom I paid my first visit only today, received me with marked cordiality. Without going into details he said, in allusion to German-Vatican relations, that I knew his wishes, and that he only hoped they would be realized in the not too distant future, in spite of the existing difficulties of which he was well aware.

*Osservatore Romano* has again received instructions to desist from attacks against the German Government.<sup>4</sup> In effect, reproduction of anti-German press comments has recently been refrained from.

In view of the unmistakably forthcoming attitude of the Curia, I leave it to your discretion whether the press be recommended to continue a restrained objectivity towards Vatican affairs, the more so as this attitude has met with appreciation here, especially in Italian circles as well. For the time being there is no question of our taking other measures.<sup>5</sup>

BERGEN

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (533/239010). In this telegram, Bergen reported his views of the possible attitude of the newly appointed Cardinal Secretary of State, Luigi Maglione, towards Germany.

<sup>3</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 475.

<sup>4</sup> See also *ibid.*, document No. 473.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "Minister Aschmann: Will this suggestion be met? W[eizsäcker]. 20 [3]." (ii) "Herr Zeileisen: Letter to R[eich] Prop[aganda] Min[istry]. A[schmann]." (iii) "State Secretary: Request to this effect made to R[eich] P[ropaganda] Min[istry]. Aschmann. 21/III."

## No. 29

7493/E540488-89

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 98 of March 18 -

BUCHAREST, March 18, 1939—[7:30 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>

Received March 19—1:15 a.m.

Pol. IV 1836.

With reference to your telegram No. 86 of March 17.<sup>2</sup>

I have spoken to the Foreign Minister, Gafencu, on the lines desired by the Hungarian Foreign Minister.<sup>3</sup> Gafencu declared that Rumanian troops would remain on the frontier. His earlier proposal<sup>4</sup> for occupying Carpatho-Ukraine had been due to military advice, had Poland also marched in . . . (group mutilated) Hungary would have occupied two-thirds of Carpatho-Ukraine; Rumania and Poland would have shared in the occupation of the western third.<sup>5</sup> This would not have had the import and significance of a definite occupation, but only of a military safeguard for her frontier. Rumania, who wanted no territorial aggrandizement, had wished to withdraw subsequently to the Rumanian villages and the railroads along the Black Theiss [Czarna Tisza].

After having duly stated that she did not wish to march in, Rumania had abandoned this action and hoped that she would be awarded the following places by diplomatic means: Aspa de Jos-Aspa de Mijloc, Biserica, Alba and Slatinaocna, which all lie north of Sighet and have almost purely Rumanian populations, as well as the railway line from Rumania to Poland. She renounced her claim to further places bearing Rumanian names but which had already become Ruthenianized.

Hungary should declare herself in agreement with the occupation of this territory in the interests of improving Rumanian-Hungarian relations. If Hungary did not do this voluntarily, Rumania would abandon her claims altogether as she desired no increase of territory. In this event, however, the spirit of Rumanian-Hungarian relations would suffer greatly.<sup>6</sup>

In my opinion, Hungary should quickly agree to the cession of this strip of territory, since the railway—whose only connecting link lies

<sup>1</sup> Inserted from the draft filed in the Bucharest Legation (7486/E540442-45).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Count Csáky.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 7, footnote 2.

<sup>5</sup> This passage "had Poland . . . occupation of the western third" was corrupt as received. The text in the Bucharest draft reads at this point ". . . due to military advice in the event that the Poles had also invaded. Thereupon Hungary would have occupied two thirds of Carpatho-Ukraine; Rumania and Poland would have shared the occupation of the remaining third."

<sup>6</sup> The substance of this telegram was repeated to Budapest by Weizsäcker in telegram No. 79 of Mar. 20 (not printed, 1975/438332-33).

across Rumania—is quite useless to her. It would be to our advantage if Rumania, by the occupation, were to participate in the liquidation of Czecho-Slovakia.

FABRICIUS

## No. 30

1975/438330

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 99 of March 18

BUCHAREST, March 18, 1939—9:30 p.m.

Received March 19—1:15 a.m.

Pol. IV 1835.

1) At yesterday's Crown Council presided over by the King, Gafencu's policy was unanimously approved. The military measures are confined to safeguarding the frontiers. There is to be no marching in until matters are clarified with Hungary. The policy of *rapprochement* with Germany was also approved, in particular the proposed Wohlthat agreement.<sup>1</sup>

2) Foreign Minister Gafencu today corrected a *Times* report,<sup>2</sup> according to which Germany was making unilateral demands on Rumania through Wohlthat, by stating to press representatives that Wohlthat was only conducting normal economic negotiations which conformed with the interests of both parties.

3) Feeling towards us here is generally favourable, though there is no lack of rumours that German policy must lead to warlike complications. Thus Georges Brătianu<sup>3</sup> called on me today to state—at least on behalf of Maniu<sup>4</sup> and Brătianu<sup>5</sup>—that they were extremely anxious and feared that in the event of a conflict we would advance into the Rumanian raw material area with help from Hungary. I reassured him by stating that the Western Powers would not let it come to offensive action and that it was open to the Rumanian Government to cooperate with us on a large scale in the economic field so that such action would be unnecessary. Foreign Minister Gafencu also expressed his anxiety about the future, as Italian desires and our colonial demands probably could now hardly be realized by peaceful negotiations. I replied that our experience had shown that only in this way could the Western Powers be brought to the conference table.<sup>6</sup>

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> Wohlthat had been sent to represent the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan in negotiating a trade agreement with Rumania, which was concluded on Mar. 23. See document No. 73.

<sup>2</sup> Of Mar. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Georges Brătianu, leader of the dissident National Liberal Party.

<sup>4</sup> Iuliu Maniu, Leader of the National Peasant Party and former Minister President.

<sup>5</sup> Possibly Dinu Brătianu, leader of the National Liberal Party.

<sup>6</sup> See also vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 306 and 309.

## No. 31

7487/E540449

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 100 of March 18

BUCHAREST, March 18, 1939—9:30 p.m.

Received March 18 [19] —1:15 p.m.

W III 2099.

The Rumanian Foreign Minister requests that 50 waggon-loads of war material which had been despatched from the Czech arms and munitions factory at Pulínovska for Rumania and held up by the Germans on the Polish frontier near Moravska-Ostrava be released as soon as possible for despatch here.

He also asks what is the Reich Government's attitude regarding other Rumanian armament production [*Rüstungsherstellungen* sic ? orders—*Rüstungsbestellungen*] in Czechia. List is to follow.<sup>1</sup>

Please telegraph instructions.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> The list was forwarded as an enclosure to Bucharest report No. 1074 of Mar. 24 (not printed, 7487/E 540452-54), which also enclosed a copy of a letter of Mar. 23 from Fabricius to Gafencu officially informing him that: "The Reich Government agree that delivery of armaments, ordered by Rumania in Czechia, shall be carried out by the factories and that deliveries in transit shall not be held back." Fabricius added that the waggons temporarily held up had already been released. This action was taken at the suggestion of Clodius according to a memorandum by Heyden-Rynsch of Mar. 23 (not printed, 2448/D515012).

## No. 32

7634/E545384

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 53 of March 18

ANKARA, March 18, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received March 18—9:25 p.m.

W III 2150.

During yesterday evening's reception in honour of the Bulgarian Minister President,<sup>2</sup> Numan<sup>3</sup> drew me aside so as to expound in a detailed conversation the Turkish Government's views on the new situation. In the opinion of Turkey, Greater Germany's relations with the Balkans had now entered upon a new phase. Turkey was ready to cooperate actively in order that the Balkans, as an *entité géographique et économique*, might become more than ever an economic

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Gheorghe Kiosseivanov.

<sup>3</sup> Numan Menemencioglu, Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry.

hinterland of Germany and also be at her disposal in times of political crisis as a reliable and largest possible source of supplies. As a result of this there would gradually arise a still stronger *côhesion politique* if Germany were to refrain from insisting on a unilateral and manifestly partisan attitude by the Balkan States in the ideological struggle.

As it is to be assumed that leading Turkish personalities will soon reopen this subject in conversations with me, I should be grateful for instructions by telegram as to the language I should hold.

KROLL

### No. 33

6402/E474884-85

#### *The Chargé d'Affairs in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

No. 92 of March 18

Received March 18 [19]—5:15 a.m.

W VIII a 607.

With reference to your telegram No. 84 of [March] 18.<sup>2</sup>

The Treasury announced at midday today that it had been decided at yesterday's Cabinet meeting to impose "countervailing duties"<sup>3</sup> on all dutiable imports from Germany. The Treasury's decision is based as regards form on the opinion given by the Attorney-General<sup>4</sup> today who, with a reference to the normal case of the Cotton Inland Accounts arrangement,<sup>5</sup> described the German premium on cotton of 33½ per cent over the world market price, and all similar premiums, as a subsidy within the meaning of section 303 of the Tariff Act. The fact that the approval of the Attorney-General and the decision of the Treasury rest on the basic principles of the Inland Accounts procedure<sup>6</sup> which were specifically sanctioned by the Treasury over two years ago, and against which no objections were raised a short time ago during the preliminary discussions on the inclusion of lard, clearly proves that a purely political decision, connected with the present political events, is involved which can, therefore, no longer be met by factual arguments. I therefore regard telegram No. 84 as superseded by events and no longer practicable. From what has been hitherto announced, the idea of selective promotion of exports plays no part in the opinion. The copper arrangement is merely quoted as a further case of the same nature.

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 27.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Murphy.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 56, footnote 6.

<sup>6</sup> The *Inlandskontenverfahren*, commonly called *Inko*, was a system of so-called "inland accounts" for compensation trade with the United States, set up under regulations

Contrary to the Under Secretary of State's announcement of yesterday<sup>7</sup> the additional duties do not enter into force at once but on April 23. In general they are provisionally fixed at 25 per cent of the invoice value and are to be paid by the importer in all cases of dutiable imports, with reservations as to a final computation according to the merits of the individual case, the fixing of higher or lower additional duties, and also their possible refund if it is established beyond doubt that no subsidy is present.

The statements of the Treasury and Justice Departments to the press follow in the original text *en clair*.<sup>8</sup>

THOMSEN

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Not printed; telegram No. 91 of Mar. 18 (6402/E474886-88).

### No. 34

6564/E490348-50

#### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 530

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1939.

Received—March 29.

P. 3326.

Subject: Attitude of the American press and public opinion to the New Order in Czecho-Slovakia.

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 81 and 94 of March 16 and 20.<sup>1</sup>

If the American press and public opinion displayed reserve at the beginning of this week in assessing the events in former Czecho-Slovakia, this picture has altered substantially in the course of the last few days, after the full significance of the German measures had been recognized and the British and French attitude had become known. The press, which first characterized the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia as a natural

<sup>1</sup> Neither printed (5459/E366665-66 and E366667-68); they deal with American press and public opinion. It appears from a carbon copy of this despatch (2422/511687-89) that the despatch was prepared on Mar. 18 but not sent until later and that the references (i.e., Mar. 16 and 20) were added before despatch.

issued in January 1937 by the German foreign exchange control authority, the object being to avoid the application of countervailing duties to dutiable German imports into the United States. These "inland accounts" were opened in various German banks for individual United States importers only, not for banks. In March 1939, the Attorney-General of the United States submitted to the Secretary of the Treasury an opinion that this inland account procedure amounted to subsidisation of German exports within the meaning of section 303 of the Tariff Act of 1930. Thereupon, on March 18, the Treasury Department issued a ruling providing that as from Apr. 23, countervailing duties be collected on dutiable merchandise imported from Germany if this had been acquired by or through the sale of other goods on a premium basis. See *Foreign-Trade and Exchange Controls in Germany*, Report No. 150, Second Series, 1942, published by the United States Tariff Commission (Washington, Government Printing Office).

consequence of the Munich Agreement, and for the most part advocated United States *désintéressement* as regards this development, has now rapidly changed over to spiteful attacks on Germany. The leading articles of the main newspapers emphasize, in the most varied forms, that the capitulation of Czecho-Slovakia was not voluntary, but that it had rather been systematically prepared in the various parts of the country by German propaganda and subversive activity, and was finally achieved at Hitler's dictation. Use is also frequently made of a report that the Führer had, during the negotiations with the Czecho-Slovak Government, threatened an aerial bombardment of Prague if his wishes were not complied with.

The occupation of Czech territory and the setting up of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia is said to be a breach of the Munich Agreement. By this action Hitler had not only violated an international treaty but had also contravened the spirit of the Munich Agreement which lay in the peaceful settlement of all European questions in cooperation with the Governments of the Western Powers.

From this, and in view of former declarations by the Führer that Germany had, beyond the Sudeten-German territories, no further territorial claims in Europe, it appears to these newspaper writers that there is clear proof of the unreliability of the German Government and their promises. In this respect, Chamberlain's statements at Birmingham<sup>2</sup> have naturally helped to strengthen these views, and to give still greater impetus to the campaign of hate directed against us. The speech, which was broadcast over the North American radio, commanded great attention here, and has been welcomed, in conjunction with Sumner Welles' statement,<sup>3</sup> as the joint expression of Anglo-American disapproval.

In view of the attitude here, it is not surprising that the press is shedding bitter tears over the former Czecho-Slovak State and its Government. After the collapse of Red Spain the last true democracy had now disappeared from Central Europe also. Descriptions abound of the reign of terror which the Secret Police have allegedly inaugurated for rooting out the last resistance, and to which 12,000 people in concentration camps are said to have already fallen victim.

The newspapers have published, under large headlines, reports of the immediate transport of the Czech gold reserve from Prague, to the amount of 80 million dollars; and they cannot resist seeing in this act the true reason for the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia.

In the flood of commentaries, the question constantly comes up as to whether, with the establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 23, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> On Mar. 17. See *Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy 1931-1941* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1943) (hereinafter cited as *Peace and War*), No. 126.

Moravia, the German hunger for expansion is sated; and the conclusion is reached that no illusions should be entertained about it. Arthur Krock (*New York Times*) enlarges upon this question in an exposition of the views of members of the State Department, wherein he speaks of two possibilities with which the world must reckon: a crisis in the Mediterranean in the very near future, in which Germany will support the claims of the already impatient Italy, or—as seems to him more probable—a German advance against Poland, who, through the territorial reorganisation, is already in the pincers.

On the attitude of the United States to this development, views expressed in the press and by public opinion differ, according to whether the individual happens to be more attracted by the activist Roosevelt methods or by isolationism. There can be no doubt, however, that, by reason of the latest events, the greater part of the press is advocating support of the democracies in Europe even more vigorously than before.

There is also practical unanimity of opinion today that, as a result of the new situation, America is more than ever obliged to make the Western Hemisphere safe against the totalitarian Powers.

A collection of correspondents' reports, commentaries of the American press and cartoons is forwarded herewith.<sup>4</sup>

THOMSEN

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

## No. 35

1625/388364-70

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 1536

LONDON, March 18, 1939.

Received March 21.

Pol. II 827.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The British attitude to the events in former Czecho-Slovakia.

The development and present state of the political crisis which has come about in German-British relations as a result of the course of events in former Czecho-Slovakia may be summed up as follows:

### I

As long as the public here was merely concerned with the conflict between Czechia and Slovakia, it showed—in press articles, in speeches and in private statements—a pronounced tendency to affirm, with a feeling of relief, its complete aloofness from these events. The experience of the September crisis and the unpopularity enjoyed by Czecho-Slovakia since that time because—according to convictions



here—of her completely drifting into the wake of Germany, further tended to strengthen these feelings.

This attitude was only modified when the incorporation of Czechia into the German Reich came about and German troops began their advance. The first reaction to this news—the declarations by Chamberlain and Halifax in the Commons and the House of Lords<sup>1</sup>—allowed of no doubt as to the markedly disapproving attitude of the British Government, but it was reserved and moderate. The reasons for this reserve were as follows: a certain slowness of the British in taking decisions, the lack of complete information, and the desire to preclude from the start any doubt that the British Government might possibly intend allowing things to result in a new September crisis on account of Czechia.

Consonant with the attitude of the Government, the press, too, was for the most part reserved and impartial on the first day; only the traditionally anti-German papers took up their hostile campaign.

From Wednesday, March 15, onwards, the mood stiffened perceptibly: the politically-minded public awakened from the unexpected shock they had received; the news of the extent of the invasion and the thorough preparations necessary for it became known. The sharper line taken within the Cabinet, especially by Lord Halifax, who has yielded completely to the influence of the Foreign Office, asserted itself. False reports, for instance, that the German troops had commenced marching in during the negotiations between the Führer and President Hácha, that misleading information was given to the British and French Ambassadors until the last moment, and that the German-Czech agreement had been extorted from Hácha by threats, are additional irritants.

Above all, however, it became clear both to the adherents and to the enemies of Chamberlain that the position of the Prime Minister himself had also suffered seriously. He had been looked upon as the representative of the Munich policy and as the supporter of a settlement with Germany by means of frank discussion. He had, a few days previously, made optimistic statements to the press regarding the tranquillization of the international situation and the improvement of the economic outlook. Great hopes had been attached by the public to Stanley's projected visit to Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

This structure had now, it was thought, collapsed. Chamberlain's statement in the Commons was criticized as being rather weak. His antagonists raised their heads anew. Hence the sharp tone of his Birmingham speech.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 15. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, cols. 435–440, and *House of Lords* (hereinafter cited as *H. of L.*), vol. 112, cols. 214–218.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 11.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 23, footnote 1.

## II

It is improbable that the incorporation of Czechia into Germany will result in German-British relations becoming increasingly strained to a point at which there is a danger of war. It is just as certain, however, that the present crisis will have deep and lasting repercussions; deeper, in any case, than those resulting from the Austrian *Anschluss*, the September crisis, and the anti-Jewish movement in November 1938.

For political circles in Britain, including the Prime Minister himself, the picture formed of National Socialist Germany has been radically altered. The following circumstances have contributed towards this:

1) The Führer's statement that he had no further territorial claims to put forward in Europe had been interpreted in too drastic and unpolitical a manner. Those who—like Chamberlain—had relied on this, felt that they had been misled in their confidence in the Führer's word.

2) It had been concluded from the National Socialist ideology and the words of the Führer that Germany was only aspiring to the annexation of Germans and not to that of members of alien races. The incorporation of seven million Czechs has exploded this idea, especially as the press had purposely minimized the significance and extent of the autonomy granted.

3) It had been assumed that the "Munich policy" would prepare the way for, and bring about, an arrangement and a delimitation of spheres of interest with Germany by means of friendly discussions. Germany's course of action in Czechia has been understood as a fundamental and curt repudiation.

4) Nor had the real significance of the incorporation of Czechia been understood. In Britain, this State had, in any case, been looked upon since Munich as a vassal of Germany, and one which, in case of emergency, was exposed to the latter's military attack without the chance to resist. Why, therefore, the "annexation" and the military invasion with all its attendant political risks abroad? Merely—so it was further concluded—because Germany had reverted purely to power politics.

From the fulness of these disappointments and shattered hopes, there has arisen complete uncertainty regarding the aims of Germany and the policy to be adopted towards her. Does Germany aspire to "world dominion", or at least to the hegemony of Europe? Will her next undertaking be the overpowering of Rumania or an attack on Poland? What policy can be adopted towards so incalculable a State? These and similar questions are discussed here in London today by people who wish to be taken seriously.

## III

It is not yet clear what practical conclusions the British Government will draw in respect of Germany from the events in Czechia. The discussion of this matter within the Cabinet and in consultation with

friendly Governments is in full swing. The differences between the moderate and radical trends are becoming more distinct. Feelings in the country are being investigated by Members of Parliament who are visiting their constituencies over the week-end. Opinions are still fluid and have not crystallized into hard and fast decisions. The following facts and considerations may give certain pointers to the attitude to be expected from the British Government:

Chamberlain's position has been strengthened by his speech in Birmingham, even though the Eden-Churchill opposition, which now makes a show of loyalty, has gained considerably in influence. As long as Chamberlain is at the helm, a relatively moderate course is assured.

However, even if it is assumed that Chamberlain's ultimate objective is still a peaceful settlement with Germany, the means for the attainment of this objective will change. As it is believed in Britain that the method of friendly negotiation can be regarded as having broken down, the attempt will now be made to "bring Germany to reason" by adopting a strong line, by creating obstacles, and by refusing—perhaps in the economic field—to meet us in any way.

Increased international activity in this respect is already shown by the feelers put out to France, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the Balkan States. It is not yet clear whether the object of these conversations is the creation of a new, strong coalition against Germany, or only an agreement upon measures in the event of further German attacks on other States, for instance, Rumania or Poland. At present the second eventuality is the more probable. The idea of contracting new obligations towards distant countries will never be to the liking of the British Government.

A definite objective which the British Government will have in mind will be to prevent, as far as possible without undertaking commitments, further unilateral actions and increases of territory on the part of Germany by creating the greatest possible reserves of strength (in the shape of agreements for an emergency with other States).

A settlement with Germany has, after being a primary objective of British policy, now become a secondary one. If this question is again to become a live issue, it must be preceded by the establishment of a basis of confidence which is at present completely lacking. It would be wrong to cherish any illusions that a fundamental change has taken place in Britain's attitude to Germany.

V. DIRKSEN

## No. 36

2050/447305

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 236

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

The following is to be added to yesterday's record of my conversation of the 17th instant with the British Ambassador:<sup>1</sup>

Henderson again explained that there was no direct British interest in the Czecho-Slovak territory. His—Henderson's—anxieties were more for the future. German policy had started a new chapter. What had now happened could no longer be brought under the heading of "the self-determination of peoples". We were on the road to territorial expansion of power. After the elimination of Czecho-Slovakia everyone was asking: "What next?"<sup>2</sup> This anxious question was reflected in the British attitude. In turn, the German answer to the British attitude would not be long delayed. Germany felt herself to be under pressure from a general counter-action in British policy. This exchange would grow more intense and would finally nullify the propitious first beginnings of a German-British understanding which the now seventy year old Chamberlain had so sedulously and patiently brought about. At the end of it all there would again be a German-British collision if the policy represented by Chamberlain were not adhered to.

In this connection, Henderson then asked me to give the reasons which had in the last few days inevitably led to the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 16.<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 37

2723/532731

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

CONFIDENTIAL

St.S. No. 244

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador told me *privately*, and not to go further, that he had received a telegram of information from Rome which describes the recent mission of Prince Philip of Hesse. According to this telegram the Prince was given the following reply:

- 1) The Head of the Italian Government took note of the communication regarding the events in Czecho-Slovakia.
- 2) In the event of a war between Italy and France, Italy would not

need the assistance of German manpower, but would probably need support in the form of war and raw materials.<sup>1</sup>

Attolico added that the Prince would, on his return, render direct the complete and detailed report<sup>2</sup> on his conversation in Rome.

Submitted to the Foreign Minister.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum, St. S. No. 250 of Mar. 20 (not printed, F19/453-52), Weizsäcker recorded that Attolico paid him a visit before leaving for Rome and pressed for an official German statement on the subject of point 2 above. Weizsäcker replied in an evasive manner.

<sup>2</sup> No such report has been found, but see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 463, and this volume, document No. 52.

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Copies to the Under State Secretary and the Director of the Economic Policy Department with the request to refrain from making further use of this."

## No. 38

350/202291

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 246

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

Prompted by British press reports,<sup>1</sup> the Italian Ambassador has now again spoken to me regarding certain documents which are alleged to exist, according to which the German march into Czecho-Slovakia was already settled three or four weeks ago. In this connection, Attolico also remarked that this could hardly be correct as he had, in fact, only been informed at the last minute.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The *Daily Express* of Mar. 16 had stated that "Long secret reports from British diplomats in Europe were before the Cabinet yesterday, and Ministers were perturbed by the revelations they made of German methods in 'engineering' the situation in Czecho-Slovakia".

## No. 39

1962/437958

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, March 18, 1939.

Pol. IV 1964.

The Hungarian Minister called on me today and informed me, in reply to a question directed to him in the middle of the week by the State Secretary,<sup>1</sup> that the Hungarian Government, right up to the beginning of the march into the Carpatho-Ukraine, had notified neither

<sup>1</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 238.

the Polish, nor the Rumanian, nor any other Government of their intentions. Only after this entry had certain diplomatic conversations taken place. In particular, Poland, as we would certainly be aware, had offered to play the part of a sort of mediator between Hungary and Rumania and had transmitted the Rumanian desire for the cession of the most easterly tip of the Carpatho-Ukraine, including the railway line which crossed it, and the aforesaid villages with a Rumanian population. Hungary had replied to Poland as follows: Rumania had no grounds at all for presenting Hungary with demands of any nature. Nevertheless, the Hungarian Government were prepared—in direct negotiations with Rumania—to take the latter's local interests into consideration in some way or other. However, should Rumania adopt any course designed to exert pressure, this would be unsuccessful. Should Rumania march in, the Hungarian Army would throw the Rumanian troops out again.

In continuation of this conversation, M. Sztójay expressed, on instructions from Count Csáky, the Hungarian Government's most warm and sincere thanks to the German Government and, in particular, to the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary for the interest shown in this question, and for the German attitude. This expression of thanks also applies particularly to the attitude adopted by Germany towards Rumania.

WOERMANN

## No. 40

2871/563856-59; 563-67

### *Treaty of Protection between Germany and Slovakia*<sup>1</sup>

The German Government and the Slovak Government have, since the Slovak State placed itself under the protection of the German Reich,<sup>2</sup> agreed to regulate by means of a treaty the situation resulting therefrom. For this purpose the undersigned plenipotentiaries of the two Governments have agreed on the following provisions:

#### Article 1

The German Reich assumes the protection of the political independence of the Slovak State and the integrity of its territory.

<sup>1</sup> This Treaty was signed in Vienna on Mar. 18 by Tuka and Ďurčanský only. An annexed protocol (not printed, 2871/563860) pledges the Slovak representatives to obtain Tiso's signature to the Treaty by noon on Mar. 19, in return for which Keppler, the German representative, undertook to obtain Ribbentrop's signature within 24 hours. After signature by Tiso the Treaty was signed by Ribbentrop in Berlin, on Mar. 23, together with the Confidential Protocol. The Treaty was published without this Protocol (see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, p. 606).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 10.

## Article 2

In order to carry out the protection assumed by the German Reich, the German Wehrmacht shall at all times have the right to set up military installations in a zone, bounded on the west by the frontier of the Slovak State and on the east by the general line of the eastern edge of the Little Carpathians, the eastern edge of the White Carpathians, and the eastern edge of the Javornik Mountains, and to man these installations with such forces as the German Wehrmacht consider necessary. The Slovak Government will arrange for the requisite land for these installations to be placed at the disposal of the German Wehrmacht. Furthermore, the Slovak Government will agree to an arrangement which is necessary for supplying the German troops and servicing the military installations from the Reich duty free.

Military sovereign rights will be exercised by the German Wehrmacht in the zone specified in the foregoing paragraph 1.

Persons of German nationality who are engaged by virtue of a private contract in the setting up of military installations in the zone thus designated are to that extent subject to German jurisdiction.

## Article 3

[In order better to defend the Slovak State against any possible external attacks]<sup>3</sup> the Slovak Government will organise their own military forces in close consultation with the German Wehrmacht.

## Article 4

In accordance with the agreed relations of protection, the Slovak Government will always conduct their foreign policy in close consultation with the German Government.

## Article 5

This Treaty enters into force immediately upon signature and is valid for a period of 25 years. The two Governments will consult about an extension of the Treaty in good time before the expiry of this period.

In witness whereof the plenipotentiaries on both sides have signed two copies of this Treaty.

VIENNA, March 18, 1939.

BERLIN, March 23, 1939.

For the German Government:

V. RIBBENTROP

For the Slovak Government:

DR. JOZEF TISO

VOJTECH TUKA

DR. F. ĐURČANSKÝ

<sup>3</sup> The passage in square brackets is deleted in the final text. This deletion is the subject of a further protocol (not printed, 2871/563861-62) which specifies that the new, contracted Article 3 is the only valid one and that the necessary amendments are to be made by hand before publication.

CONFIDENTIAL PROTOCOL ON ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL COOPERATION  
BETWEEN THE GERMAN REICH AND THE STATE OF SLOVAKIA

The undersigned plenipotentiaries of the German Reich Government and the Slovak Government have today agreed that the German Reich and the Slovak State shall cooperate in the closest possible manner in the spheres of economy and finance according to the following provisions.

Article I

Cooperation shall extend in particular to:

1) The increase and direction of Slovak agricultural production with a view to market possibilities in Germany, e.g., increasing the breeding of pigs and raising milk production.

2) Development of the Slovak timber industry and forestry by drawing up long term economic plans with a view to market possibilities in Germany.

3) Surveying, opening up and exploiting Slovak mineral resources. It is agreed that the mineral resources, insofar as they are not required by Slovakia herself, will be made available to Germany in the first instance. The "Reichsstelle für Bodenforschung" will be entrusted with the entire survey for mineral resources. As soon as possible the Slovak State Government will investigate whether the prospecting rights and titles are being used by the present owners in accordance with their legal obligations, and in cases where these obligations have been neglected, will terminate these prospecting rights and titles.

4) Development and direction in industrial production with a view to German and Slovak vital interests and market conditions and co-operation in the sphere of exporting industrial and other goods.

5) Development of the means of communication and transport in Slovakia.

Article II

Slovakia will introduce a currency of her own and will establish a Slovak National Bank as the central bank of issue.

Germany will give Slovakia her support in establishing a Slovak National Bank and in legislating for and administering foreign exchange control.

The German Reichsbank will participate in due form in the establishment of the Slovak National Bank and will delegate to the board of Directors of this bank an adviser who will take part in all important decisions. The Slovak Government will also consult this adviser in drawing up and carrying out the State Budget and will not raise any loans without his consent.

The German currency taken into Slovakia during the military operations in March 1938 will be bought back at the rate of 1 Kč = 10 pfennig.



It is envisaged that in order to relieve the shortage of currency in Slovakia the National Bank in Prague will be induced to transfer at once to Bratislava currency to the amount of 350 million Kč.

### Article III

Both Governments will in due course enter into negotiations on trade and payments agreements. These agreements will in particular be concluded on the basis that Germany will purchase Slovakia's agricultural produce, forestry products and other goods, including minerals, and will supply in return finished goods, semi-finished products and capital goods.

Slovakia will not conduct economic negotiations with other States until after the conclusion of the agreements with Germany and will keep Germany constantly informed about these negotiations. A Customs Union between the German Reich and Slovakia is not envisaged. During the period of transition, however, exemption from customs will be granted until further notice between Slovakia on the one hand and the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and the Sudeten German territories on the other.

### Article IV

This Protocol will enter into force on the day of signature. Both parties will treat the Protocol as strictly confidential and will divulge its contents only by mutual consent.

BERLIN, March 23, 1939.

For the German Reich Government:  
V. RIBBENTROP

For the Slovak Government:  
VOJTECH TUKA  
Dr. F. ĐURČANSKÝ

### No. 41

2050/447323

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 55 of March 19

BELGRADE, March 19, 1939—1:10 p.m.  
Received March 19—4:45 p.m.

As I learn from a reliable source, the events of the last week have aroused extreme anxiety also in authoritative circles here, including the very highest quarter. Besides the fear of a recurring exacerbation of the European crisis, anxiety for their own security in the face of the dynamic force of the Axis Powers and uncertainty as to the further development of the Croat problem contribute to this. Even if, as I have been able to ascertain, the rumours circulating here that Stojadinović has again been received by the Prince Regent and has been asked

to take over the Foreign Ministry are not correct, such a development would not surprise me with the mood prevailing today.

If this mood continues, Yugoslavia's attitude towards the Axis will be determined more and more by fear, and less and less by sympathy, and at the same time the need for turning towards the Western Powers will increase, wherever this appears possible without displeasing the Axis.

HEEREN

## No. 42

2707/535825

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 79 of March 19

LONDON, March 19, 1939—3:25 p.m.

Received March 19—7:45 p.m.

Pol. II 798.

1. In this morning's press, too, speculations about alleged German intentions towards Rumania are the most prominent features, although it is reported that Bucharest, Berlin, and also the Rumanian Legation here, deny that Germany had presented an economic ultimatum to Rumania.

2. I learn the following from a reliable informant on this: On March 17, Tilea, the Rumanian Minister here, on his own initiative told the Foreign Office<sup>1</sup> of unreasonable German economic demands on Rumania because, according to his information, German-Rumanian economic negotiations appeared to be producing favourable results, and, in consequence, his own plans for developing Anglo-Rumanian economic relations would come to nothing. Tilea was given a very severe reprimand by Gafencu for his action and after a lengthy and vehement telephone conversation has been instructed to issue a *démenti*.

Tilea's intrigues were accepted by Halifax as Gospel truth, especially as reports were coming in of accelerated German troop movements from Prague in an easterly direction. Reports and constant agitation in the British press are thus explained.

3. Independently of this, King Carol has apparently suggested an exchange of views regarding a guarantee of the Rumanian frontiers by the Western Powers.

KORDT

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 395.

## No. 43

2050/147333

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 34 of March 19

Moscow, March 19, 1939—6:28 p.m.

Received March 19—9:30 p.m.

Yesterday towards midnight a Note arrived signed by Litvinov,<sup>1</sup> the text of which is being telegraphed by the DNB representative, and in which the Soviet Government state that, in order to avoid conveying a false impression of indifference, they do not consider it possible to pass over in silence our notification regarding the Czecho-Slovak affair. The crux of the three-page Note is the statement that the Soviet Government cannot recognize the constitutional alterations in Czecho-Slovakia as legal, since they were carried out without consulting the people.

Before the arrival of the Note, I met Litvinov at a reception given by the Italian Ambassador.<sup>2</sup> Litvinov asked whether I had received his Note; when I replied in the negative and asked what the Note contained he answered: Since the British and French Governments had protested about the Czecho-Slovak events and the President of the United States had issued a "statement",<sup>3</sup> the Soviet Government considered that they, too, had to clarify their position, which was that the Soviet Government could not recognize the alterations in the constitutional structure of Czecho-Slovakia.

After the Note had meanwhile been delivered to me in the Italian Embassy, I again talked with Litvinov and asked him what was the practical import of his Note. Litvinov merely replied that the Soviet Government had simply wished to make their point of view clear. My impression, based on Litvinov's manner and the second paragraph of the Soviet Note, is that the Soviet Government will also from now on not act independently but will be guided by the attitude of Great Britain, France, and the United States.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Augusto Rosso.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original. Presumably the statement by Sumner Welles, on Mar. 17. See document No. 34, footnote 3.

## No. 44

1848/421059

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 247

BERLIN, March 19, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador has again spoken to me on the subject of Germany's deliveries of coal to Italy. He said that Ciano had

telegraphed to him that at the very moment when we were in arrears with our deliveries to Italy we were sending such supplies to France and Belgium. The matter had a political aspect, and exceptional measures would have to be taken to tide over the present disastrous situation.

I answered Attolico that I had already yesterday taken an interest in the matter myself, and would do so again.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 45

583/242039-40

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

ROME (Quirinal), March 20, 1939—9:40 p.m.

No. 102 of March 20

Received March 21, 1939—1:00 a.m.

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 100 of the 17th,<sup>1</sup> and to our telephone conversation of today.<sup>2</sup>

Today, when delivering to Ciano the Note already promised to him orally on March 17 (your telegram No. 11<sup>3</sup> of March 17) referring to his observations of March 17 and with reference to the preliminary conversation between the State Secretary and Attolico on the same subject, I told him that, according to information received today from the State Secretary, the anxiety which he had expressed to me on the preceding Friday evening regarding our attitude to the development of the Croat question was without foundation. What I had already told him on March 17 was therefore confirmed.

Ciano took note of my observations and formulated the Italian viewpoint by saying that Italy primarily desired the continued existence of the present Yugoslav State; but that Italy, should those events ever occur which today no longer seemed to him impossible in view of the growth of the Croat autonomy movement under the influence of the developments in the Czecho-Slovak question, expected from the German side the same *désintéressement* in this area, which today directly concerned her interests there, as she herself had shown towards us with regard to the development of the Czecho-Slovak question. What

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 15.

<sup>2</sup> According to a memorandum by Mackensen of Mar. 20 (not printed, 2130/465304-05) he had that morning telephoned Weizsäcker with reference to document No. 15 and asked for further information. He had been told that Weizsäcker had already had a brief preliminary conversation with Attolico and that Ribbentrop was considering a personal letter to Ciano (see document No. 55); meantime Weizsäcker could already state definitely that the fears Ciano had expressed were entirely without foundation.

<sup>3</sup> This number is evidently an error. From references on the Rome draft (2130/465306-08) of this document it would appear that the telegram under reference was the circular of Mar. 17 cited in document No. 14, footnote 1.

happened on the shores of the Adriatic was an Italian family affair just as the new order in the area of former Czecho-Slovakia had been treated by Italy as a German family affair. I replied that this view did indeed coincide with the Führer's words, which he himself had quoted, regarding the delimitation of the living space of both parties, nor did I put any other construction on the State Secretary's observations of today. I would, however, immediately inform Berlin of the Italian point of view as formulated by him.

When I asked whether he could give me any closer details regarding the sources of the rumours communicated to me on Friday, as I still had no concrete data about them, he talked of reports which had told of activity of German agents in Croatia.

Ciano finally mentioned that he was expecting Attolico's visit tomorrow, and he concluded with the remark that he would report on our conversation immediately to the Duce, who apparently had been more concerned about these rumours than Ciano had intimated on Friday.<sup>4</sup>

MACKENSEN<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> i.e. Mar. 17.

<sup>5</sup> For Ciano's record of this conversation see Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 419-420; see also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of Mar. 20.

## No. 46

414/215963

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 43 of March 20

BERLIN, March 20, 1939—10:05 p.m.

Received March 21—3:35 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 34.<sup>1</sup>

The British and French Ambassadors, who in consequence of recent events have handed in somewhat sharp Notes here on the Czecho-Slovak affair, have been informed by us that we could not accept the protests. We have completely rebuffed them and their *démarches* here.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, please decline further discussions on the matter in Moscow also.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 43.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 20 and 26.

## No. 47

1975/438331

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 94

BERLIN, March 20, 1939—10:45 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 1835 and 1836.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 98 and 99.<sup>1</sup>

1. In so far as we are concerned, we still do not intend undertaking the role of intermediary in Hungarian-Rumanian relations, are awaiting rather the direct settlement about to be reached between the two countries.<sup>2</sup>

2. All information about Germany's alleged aggressive intentions in respect of Rumania is—like the rumour, already denied,<sup>3</sup> of an ultimatum presented by us to the Rumanian Government during the economic negotiations—pure invention and deliberate mischief-making.<sup>4</sup> On this account please speak to Georges Brătianu again and assure him, on the strength of your enquiries, that his fears are completely unfounded.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 29 and 30.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 13.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 42.

<sup>4</sup> This sentence was also sent to the Ambassador in the Soviet Union in telegram No. 42 of Mar. 20 (not printed, 215/146822) as instructions on language to be held.

## No. 48

1625/388376-77

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 81 of March 20

LONDON, March 20, 1939—10:46 p.m.

Received March 21—3:00 a.m.

Pol. II 835.

Statements which Chamberlain and Halifax have just made in the House of Commons [*sic*]<sup>1</sup> still do not clarify the intentions of the British Government. Lord Halifax limited himself to a sometimes bitter presentation of the events of the last few days. He spoke of the expediency of "far-reaching mutual guarantees". According to information from reliable informants something like the following picture emerges regarding the present position: The British Government now firmly hold the initiative for discussions. They hope to take the

<sup>1</sup> See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, cols. 835-888 and *H. of L.*, vol. 112, cols. 308-319.

lead in laying down the policy to be followed so as to avoid statements of conditions being made by the other States which, in the British view, would not achieve their object. The British manifestly think of laying down a demarcation line which, in particular, includes Rumania, and the infringement of which by an aggressor would constitute a *casus belli*. The following States are said to have been asked to take part in the guarantee:—Russia, Poland, Turkey and Yugoslavia. It is unquestionably established that Hungary has not been approached. It has been left to Poland to make contact with Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia; the same applies to Turkey in respect of Greece. There is still doubt regarding Bulgaria.

It is asserted at the Turkish Embassy that Turkey would be ready to guarantee the Rumanian frontier if Britain took the lead. Poland and Russia have allegedly declared that the only form of assistance contemplated was the delivery of war material and the provision of air forces. Kennedy, the United States Ambassador here, is playing a leading part. He is said to be in personal contact with the Missions of all the States involved, and to be attempting to encourage them to adopt a firm attitude by promising that the United States of America would support them by all means ("short of war"<sup>2</sup>).

The French are cooperating extremely closely with the British.

A Soviet Russian proposal for calling a Nine-Power-Conference is said to have been rejected by Britain in order that the initiative in the whole affair should on no account be allowed to pass over to the Soviets. As I learn further, there is said to have been a sharp difference of opinion between Lord Halifax and Henderson, the British Ambassador in Berlin, when Henderson reported on his Berlin impressions.

KORDT

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 49

2771/536872

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 163 of March 20

PARIS, March 20, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received March 20—11:30 p.m.

After the promulgation of the law regarding special powers,<sup>2</sup> attention is focused—beside the unanimously emphasized desire for all-out

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 22, footnote 2.

rearmament—on the question of how a protective barrier may be erected against the German drive for expansion. First and foremost the necessity of defending Rumania is emphasized, chiefly for military reasons, as Rumanian petroleum and grain would make it possible for Germany to carry on even a long war, and would thereby remove the weakness she still suffers in this respect. In this connection the entire press records with approval Britain's leading part in the endeavour to bring about an association of "peaceful" Great Powers, as well as of the States in East and South-East Europe threatened by Germany. A further part is played by the fear that, as a result of Germany's action, Italy's claims will be strengthened, and that Germany's increase of power will place her [Italy] in a position to push these claims through.

As regards Italy, however, hope is gaining ground since the Czech events, that that country may be detached from the Axis. I learn from several quarters that Laval in particular is said to be planning a move for clearing up Franco-Italian relations, and to be employing his contacts with Italian circles towards this end.

Any of Laval's endeavours will, however, for a time be running counter to the still general rejection of Italian claims, especially those of a territorial character, such as has also received expression in Daladier's speech before the Senate. And in this there will probably be no alteration as long as the circles advocating a Franco-Italian settlement are unable to produce proofs of Italian willingness to conclude a settlement and thus loosen the solidarity of Axis policy.

BRÄUER

## No. 50

2002/442267-88

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

A 506

Moscow, March 20, 1939.

Pol. IV 1993.

Subject: Litvinov's Note on the Czecho-Slovak affair.

With reference to my telegram No. 34 of March 19.<sup>1</sup>

I beg to enclose a copy<sup>2</sup> and a German translation of the Note from Foreign Commissar Litvinov of March 18, 1939, on the Czecho-Slovak affair.

The Note was transmitted by Tass and the Moscow Radio on March 19 and has been published today by the Soviet press.

The Note represents an expression of the views of the Soviet Government and contains no protest. The reason underlying this step is that

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (Russian text), (2002/442289-91).



it is not possible for the Soviet Government to pass over in silence our Notes on the Czecho-Slovak affair,<sup>3</sup> thus creating the false impression that the Soviet Government are indifferent to the Czecho-Slovak events. After setting forth the Soviet point of view the Note concludes by stating that the Soviet Government cannot recognize as legal the incorporation of Czechia and, in one or other form, of Slovakia into the body of the German Reich.

Supplementing my previous report<sup>1</sup> on my conversation with Litvinov, I beg to add, that even the Head of the Press Section of the Foreign Commissariat<sup>4</sup> could give no answer to the question put by foreign journalists as to what practical effect the Note of the Soviet Government would have. In response to further questions as to how the attitude of the Soviet Government would affect the personal affairs of the Czechs resident here, for example over passports, etc., the Head of the Press Section said that agreement would certainly be reached on this.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Notes of Mar. 16 and 17. See footnotes 5 and 6.

<sup>4</sup> E. A. Gnedin.

2002/442202-05

[Enclosure]

Translation

Moscow, March 18, 1939.

MR. AMBASSADOR: I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your Note of the 16th<sup>5</sup> and the Note of the 17th,<sup>6</sup> informing the Soviet Government of the incorporation of Czechia into the body of the German Reich and of the establishment of a German protectorate over it.

As the Soviet Government do not deem it possible to pass over the above Notes in silence and so give the false impression that they are indifferent to Czecho-Slovak events, they consider it necessary in reply to these Notes to record their true position on the events in question.

1. Political and historical considerations mentioned in the introductory section of the German decree as the reasons and justification for it—in particular the references to the Czecho-Slovak State as a hot-bed of constant unrest and a threat to European peace, the non-viability of the Czecho-Slovak State and the consequent necessity for

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (414/215916-18); this Note repeated the text of the Declaration of Mar. 15 (vol. iv of this Series, document No. 229, excluding enclosures) and of the statement contained in vol. iv of this Series, document No. 242. Document No. 229 had been telegraphed *en clair* to all Missions in Europe and the Embassies at Washington and Tokyo (2050/447223-24); document No. 242 had, in addition to the Missions there listed, been circularized to the remaining Missions in Europe and to Washington, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Santiago and Geneva (2050/447229).

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (414/215933-38); this Note gives the text of the Proclamation by the Führer on the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 246).

special anxieties on the part of the German Reich—cannot be accepted as correct or as corresponding to the facts known to the whole world. In point of fact, of all the European countries, the Czecho-Slovak Republic after the first world war was one of the few States where internal peace and a peace-loving foreign policy were really guaranteed.

2. The Soviet Government know of no constitution in any State which gives the right to the Head of the State to terminate the independent existence of the State without the agreement of its people. It is hard to admit that any people will voluntarily declare themselves in agreement with the destruction of their independence and with their incorporation into the body of another State, much less such a people who for centuries have fought for their independence and already for twenty years have preserved their independent existence. When he signed the Berlin Declaration of the 15th, the Czecho-Slovak President, Dr. Hácha, had no authority whatever from his people to do so, and was acting in obvious contradiction to Articles 64 and 65 of the Czecho-Slovak constitution and to the will of his people. Consequently, the above-mentioned Declaration can possess no legal validity.

3. The principle of the self-determination of peoples, to which the German Government not infrequently make appeal, stipulates a free expression of the people's will, which cannot be replaced by the signature of one or of two persons, however high may be the positions which they occupy. In the case under consideration, there was no expression whatever of the will of the Czech people, not even in the form of such plebiscites as for instance took place when the fate of Upper Silesia and the Saar Territory was decided.

4. In the absence of any kind of expression of the will of the Czech people, the occupation of Czechia by German troops and the subsequent actions of the German Government must be regarded as arbitrary, violent, and aggressive.

5. The above observations apply also in their entirety to the alteration of the status of Slovakia brought about by subjecting that country to the German Reich, an alteration which has not been justified by any sort of expression of the will of the Slovak people.

6. The actions of the German Government served as the signal for a rude invasion into Carpatho-Russia by Hungarian troops and the violation of the elementary rights of its people.

7. In view of these considerations, the Soviet Government cannot recognize the incorporation of Czechia, nor that—in one form or another—of Slovakia, into the body of the German Reich as being legal, consonant with the generally acknowledged standards of international law and justice or with the principle of the self-determination of peoples.

8. In the opinion of the Soviet Government, the actions of the German Government have not only not removed any danger there may have

been to general peace but have, on the contrary, created and increased such danger, damaged the political stability of Central Europe, increased the elements of a state of unrest which had already previously been created in Europe, and dealt a new blow to the feeling of security of peoples.

I have the honour to request you, Mr. Ambassador, to bring the above to the notice of your Government, and to accept the assurance of my highest consideration.

M. LITVINOV

## No. 51

2092/452608-10

*Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep*

COPY OF AN EXTRACT<sup>1</sup> FROM A LETTER OF MARCH 20, 1939

Litvinov answered the Ambassador's Notes<sup>2</sup> on the 19th. The Soviet Note<sup>3</sup> was broadcast yesterday by Tass and the radio, and has only today appeared in the press. Its content is limited to an expression of opinion to the effect that the Soviet Government cannot recognize the Czecho-Slovak events. Obviously, the main reason for the Note is that the Soviet Government wish to show that they associate themselves with the course of action adopted by France and Britain. The Note gives the impression, moreover, that the method, more than the result, is criticized—a criticism which the Soviets have the least reason of all for making, if one remembers Georgia.<sup>4</sup>

After the Austrian *Anschluss*, Litvinov proposed an international conference but transmitted no Note. This time the Soviet Government express their point of view by means of a Note, but in a manner which relieves them of [the necessity for] further moves (for instance, the recall of the Soviet Ambassador to report).

The present attitude of the Soviet Government must in any case merit our attention. It has already struck us with what reserve Stalin spoke on Germany in his speech at the Party Congress.<sup>5</sup> I consider as still more striking certain remarks of Litvinov's to Madame Togo, the Japanese Ambassador's wife, of which she informed me in the strictest confidence. Litvinov told Madame Togo, to begin with, that he had full information that the negotiations of the Japanese Ambassador in

<sup>1</sup> The complete document has not been found. This extract bears the typewritten note: "Herewith to the Deputy Director of the Political Department and the Under State Secretary for information. Berlin, Mar. 22, 1939 (sgd.) Schliep."

<sup>2</sup> Not printed. See document No. 50, footnotes 5 and 6.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 50, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> The independent Republic of Georgia had been recognized by the Soviet Union in a Treaty signed on May 7, 1920. In February 1921, Soviet forces had invaded Georgia, which was subsequently incorporated into the Soviet Union.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 1.

Berlin for a German-Italian-Japanese military alliance had broken down owing to the attitude of Germany and Italy. In reference to this, Litvinov said that Germany and Italy were about to set their relationship with the Soviet Union in order. I assume that these remarks were essentially intended as pressure on Japan and as a counter to threats uttered by the Japanese during the fishery negotiations. In spite of this I cannot pass over such observations. In view of the attitude of Britain and France, who have broken off their economic negotiations with us,<sup>6</sup> the Soviet Union in particular, in addition to the countries of the South-East, again assumes considerable economic importance for Germany. I do not know whether, under these altered circumstances, our economic negotiations with the Soviet Government will not receive a new fillip.

Moreover, the Soviet Government appear to be giving no further thought to the practical effects of Litvinov's Note. We have reported on the matter in detail by telegram<sup>7</sup> and despatch.<sup>8</sup> Perhaps you would also care to look at Hilger's report<sup>9</sup> on the present state of the Japanese-Soviet fishery negotiations. My Japanese colleague told me only the day before yesterday that the negotiations were being continued, and that there was still some hope that they might be brought to a successful conclusion.

The British Commercial Attaché<sup>10</sup> assured me that Hudson, the Under Secretary of State, would arrive in Moscow on March 23 as previously arranged. When I asked whether there was any intention on the British side of granting the Soviet Government another credit, the Commercial Attaché twice replied that a British credit to the Soviet Government was not out of the question.

Furthermore, I must not forget to mention that, when the Ambassador informed him of the events in Czecho-Slovakia, Litvinov openly showed his satisfaction regarding the annexation of Carpatho-Ukraine by Hungary.

The Poles appear to be rather annoyed over the events in Czecho-Slovakia.

The British here are making a particular display of ill humour, a fact which reminds me strongly of my war-time experiences. The British have always taken the political successes of others as a personal affront.

The Ambassador will leave for Berlin on Thursday, March 23, as he wishes to settle various matters before he is sent to Teheran.<sup>11</sup> He will arrive in Berlin on Saturday.

TIPPELSKIRCH

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 43.

<sup>8</sup> Document No. 50.

<sup>9</sup> Not found.

<sup>10</sup> Frank Todd, Commercial Secretary at the British Embassy.

<sup>11</sup> To attend the wedding of the Iranian Crown Prince; see document No. 325, footnote 4.

## No. 52

66/46717-23

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, March 20, 1939.

NOTE ON A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND THE ITALIAN  
AMBASSADOR IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTER

The Italian Ambassador gave a short summary of the interview between the Duce and the Prince of Hesse, [recapitulating the various reasons put forward by the latter to explain Germany's action in Bohemia and Moravia, and concluding with the statement that the German divisions which had been set free by this action "would be available on any other front of the axis even tomorrow". The Prince of Hesse had added, however, that if Italy contemplated any large scale operations, it might be useful to postpone these for 18 months or two years, because at such a time Germany would have an additional 100 divisions. The Duce had replied that he was taking cognisance of the communication made by the Prince of Hesse, and that, as regards military assistance, Italy intended even in the case of a conflict with France, to fight alone, expecting from Germany only supplies of munitions and raw material but no man power.]<sup>2</sup>

The Führer replied that as regards her armed forces, Germany was now in a position to face all eventualities. He also thought that Italy was in a position<sup>3</sup> to carry through certain operations without France being able to prevent her from doing so.

He, the Führer, was asking himself, however, to what extent Great Britain might intervene in any conflict. He thought that Great Britain would almost certainly<sup>4</sup> assist France, and for these reasons he believed

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is in English in the original and the conversation appears to have been partly held in that language, probably because of Attolico's limitations in German. The idiosyncrasies of spelling and punctuation have been preserved. A German version exists which differs somewhat in drafting and sequence of topics from the English (F19/470-454); major differences between the two versions are footnoted below. On Mar. 21, Schmidt sent an urgent telegram, No. 124 (100/65627), to Mackensen saying: "On instructions from the Foreign Minister I am sending you by special courier, who will arrive in Rome at 3 p.m. tomorrow at the latest, a memorandum on the Führer-Attolico conversation; after the latter's arrival in Rome on the evening of Mar. 21 he will get in touch with you about this matter. The Foreign Minister requests that you will on no account give Attolico a written memorandum, but only oral assistance in making a comparison with the document prepared by himself and that only by means of extracts. We first promised Attolico a written copy, but, on account of the delicate nature of the matter, its delivery was cancelled, reference being made to the technical difficulties of sufficiently early transmittal and of the availability of your help." The copy sent to Mackensen was the German version of this document (1932/440187-93). It was marked "Second Corrected Memorandum". See also document No. 87.

<sup>2</sup> The passage here enclosed in square brackets has been struck out of the English version and does not appear in the German.

<sup>3</sup> The German version here adds: "under favourable circumstances".

<sup>4</sup> The German version has "certainly and in all circumstances if France were to become involved in serious difficulties" inserted here.

that<sup>5</sup> a delay of 18 months or two years might be advisable, during which time Germany could further strengthen not only her land<sup>6</sup> forces, but, above all, her naval forces. He (the Führer) had had an opportunity of admiring Italy's naval strength during his recent visit<sup>7</sup> and he must admit with regret that Germany had comparatively little to show in the way of naval forces. Her position in that respect would be considerably improved<sup>8</sup> in the winter 1940/41, when two 35,000 t battle ships would be put into commission (the last of these two ships would be launched on April 1st next and could not be put into commission earlier than November or December 1940). Furthermore new cruisers, new submarines, and other vessels would be added to Germany's present naval strength.

He, the Führer, repeated, that the question was, whether in any conflict which involved France, Great Britain would assist the latter, and he thought that that would be the case. The Führer concluded by saying that there was not the slightest doubt in his own mind that he would always unconditionally take Italy's side whenever the latter needed Germany's support.<sup>9</sup>

Japan's assistance would also be stronger in one or two years' time. The position of the two European Axis powers would, the Führer added, be immensely facilitated by the end of the Chinese war. He believed that once that war had come to an end, Japan, if only for selfish reasons would always join Italy and Germany in a general conflict. But as long as the Chinese war lasted, Japan would always be reluctant to establish any closer relations with the two other Axis Powers, a hesitation, which had manifested itself rather clearly only in recent times.<sup>10</sup>

The Führer said, that it was difficult to prophesy, but it seemed to him not to be impossible that the French might ultimately make certain concessions rather than face the extreme consequence of war.

If Great Britain assisted France in a general conflict, Germany's position would be aggravated by the fact that the British navy was

<sup>5</sup> The German version has "before such a conflict, which would in any case involve Germany" inserted here.

<sup>6</sup> The German version adds "and air" here.

<sup>7</sup> Hitler and Mussolini had reviewed the Italian Fleet at Naples on May 5, 1938.

<sup>8</sup> The German version has "in favour of the Axis Powers" inserted here.

<sup>9</sup> In the German version this paragraph reads: "In case of a conflict into which France was drawn, it seemed very probable to us at present that precisely for these reasons (not indeed unknown to England) Great Britain would support France. Naturally the reverse is also the case, for the Führer wishes to leave no doubt at all about one thing. He would always and unconditionally take Italy's side whenever the latter needed Germany's support. Only, the effect of such assistance would be very different if, owing to her own fleet, Germany could force England to split her naval forces, thus preventing England from supporting France in the Mediterranean with her entire naval force, and thus, above all, cutting Italian communications with North Africa."

<sup>10</sup> The German version makes this phrase plainer by rendering it: "which had manifested itself clearly, particularly of late".

strong enough to cut Germany's oversea's communications,<sup>11</sup> thus forcing the latter to undertake large scale military operations in order to secure her supplies. Furthermore Great Britain was also in a position to cut off Italy from her North African possessions. Within a few years the position would be more favourable because of the fact, that Germany's naval strength had increased in the meantime, thus forcing Great Britain to divide her fleet.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Poland's position must also be considered. Germany had an official friendship with Poland, but nevertheless she had to be careful. Since the destruction of Czechoslovakia, it is true, Poland's intervention against Germany, if the latter found herself in conflict with the Western Powers, was less probable but not altogether impossible.<sup>13</sup> This uncertainty forced Germany to reserve a certain number of divisions for an emergency. She had to keep all her troops in East Prussia, and furthermore, a certain number of divisions along the German-Polish frontier, which, by the way was now being heavily fortified by Germany.<sup>14</sup> The Polish Government was not an authoritarian government like the Italian or the German government, it was really a government without the support of the people and countercurrents could at any moment come to the surface.<sup>15</sup> It must also be noted in this connection that there were almost 4 million jews in that country, which could in these circumstances one day influence Poland's policy in a certain direction.<sup>16</sup> The Führer thought that, if Great Britain intervened in a general conflict Poland might quite possibly be found among Germany's enemies and, therefore, certain precautions must be taken.<sup>17</sup> There was no danger on land but Germany's naval forces were not great enough to attack the British fleet either at home or on the high seas.<sup>18</sup>

The Führer then emphasiz[ed] that he wished by no means to appear pretentious when he expressed the opinion that it would be a good thing that larger conflicts took place only in a few years, adding

<sup>11</sup> The German version here reads: "that at present not only would the British Navy be strong enough to cut Germany's overseas communications, but there would inevitably result for the moment a contraction of German trade. This would lessen the value of any German assistance. In any case Germany would be forced . . ."

<sup>12</sup> These last two sentences do not appear here in the German version; see footnote 9.

<sup>13</sup> The German version expands this phrase to read: "if the war were to last some time".

<sup>14</sup> The German version adds: "This situation too would be greatly eased in eighteen months to two years' time."

<sup>15</sup> The German version here adds: "for the purpose of thwarting Polish foreign policy".

<sup>16</sup> In place of this phrase, the German version has: "which must be reckoned with as a permanently detrimental influence on the Polish attitude".

<sup>17</sup> In the German version this phrase is expanded into: "which not only made German precautionary measures necessary, but made a little more time desirable for building them up".

<sup>18</sup> This sentence is not included in the German version.

however, that Germany would always be found at Italy's side if the latter needed her.<sup>19</sup>

The Italian Ambassador then referred to the possibility of obtaining French concessions in certain circumstances. He, the Ambassador, thought that, at the present moment France would make no concessions at all, not even on very reasonable demands. On the other hand, he believed that the Duce was almost<sup>20</sup> forced "to get something". But when he would be confronted with an obstinate France resisting all his demands a hundred percent he might lose patience. France's will to resist even the most reasonable demands, was clearly reflected in M. Daladier's full powers<sup>21</sup> and his observation that the situation was "grave and might become dramatic" to-morrow. Such words clearly indicated a stiffening of resistance also in the diplomatic field.<sup>22</sup>

The Führer replied that he thought M. Daladier's powers would not produce a consolidation of France's internal situation. While the parties of the Left had supported Daladier's full powers in the hope that they might mean greater support to the Bolshevik warmongers, the parties of the Right had given their support to the bill hoping that the full powers would ultimately be used against the parties of the Left. Within a few months<sup>23</sup> Daladier would be forced to use his full powers for very unpopular measures in France, new taxes, lengthening of the hours of work, abolition of certain social institutions, like holidays with pay, etc.

The Italian Ambassador, who said that he was speaking only on his own personal account and in no way under instruction, said that Mussolini was forced to put forward his demands to-morrow and to put his cards on the table. He did not want to and could not wait until France's internal position had deteriorated. He must put forward his demands now and would thus meet with the maximum of resistance which would put him in a very embarrass[ing] situation.

Upon a question of the Führer as to the exact nature of those demands, the Italian Ambassador replied that these demands were not known to him, nor, as far as he was aware, to any other person.<sup>24</sup> He had only heard from Count Ciano that these demands were of no

<sup>19</sup> In the German version this paragraph reads: "For these reasons, the Führer emphasized that in his view, it would be a good thing for larger conflicts only to occur in a few years' time. He did not wish this to appear pretentious, but he was merely expressing this opinion because the Italian Ambassador had himself raised the question, and asked for an answer."

<sup>20</sup> The German version here has "now" in place of "almost".

<sup>21</sup> See document No. 22.

<sup>22</sup> This sentence is not included in the German version.

<sup>23</sup> From this point onwards in the German version the sentence reads: "Daladier, in the Führer's opinion, would be compelled to use his full powers for so many unpopular measures that instead of achieving internal consolidation, a new domestic crisis was more likely to break out."

<sup>24</sup> In the German version this and the first part of the next passage is condensed to read: "When asked about the Duce's demands, Attolico replied that he had heard from Count Ciano that they were not of a territorial character."



territorial character, including the neutralization but not the session [sic] of Corsica. As regards Tunis, Italy merely demanded the restoration [sic] of the pre-war statute of Italians residing in Tunis. The demands connected with Suez and Djibuti were quite obvious.

At this juncture both the German Foreign Minister and the Führer observed that they thought it quite possible that France accepted these demands.<sup>25</sup> The Italian Ambassador emphasised that, if these very reasonable Italian claims were rejected, the Duce might lose patience.

The Führer replied that in similar cases he had laid down a very simple rule for himself. Whenever reasonable and wellfounded claims which he had put forward in the past, had been rejected, he had not acted immediately, but had merely said to himself that all the normal methods of procedure to realize these demands were exhausted, and that it was useless to handle the respective problem any longer through the diplomatic channels. He (the Führer) then awaited his moment when, without further discussion, he could quickly carry through his intentions.

Thus he had told M. Chvalkovský, when he saw him first in November<sup>26</sup> that the Czechoslovak Army must be demobilized and drastically reduced in number, that German minorities must be well treated, and that all partisans of the Benesch policy must disappear. He had repeated these same demands in January during Chvalkovský's second visit,<sup>27</sup> but the Czech seemed to take no notice. So he decided to await the moment when he could take the laws into his own hands.<sup>28</sup> If the Duce were now to put forward very precise (concrete) demands it would be a requirement of wisdom to await the moment when these demands could be realized with a minimum of effort and risk, and that moment would certainly come.

The German foreign Minister underlined the fact that Germany's "weight" would go [on] increasing during all that time.<sup>29</sup>

At the end of the interview the Führer explained the military importance which Czechoslovakia had preserved until the end by giving the Italian Ambassador the following figures:<sup>30</sup>

1900000 rifles

44000 machine guns (of which 24000 had been recovered)

2400 big guns (of which 1200 had been recovered)

1000 aeroplanes.

and 120000 t of ammunition [sic].

<sup>25</sup> This sentence is not included in the German version.

<sup>26</sup> On Oct. 14, 1938; see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 61.

<sup>27</sup> On Jan. 21, 1939; see *ibid.*, document No. 158.

<sup>28</sup> The German version condenses this passage to: "The Führer gave Czecho-Slovakia as an illustration."

<sup>29</sup> This paragraph is not included in the German version.

<sup>30</sup> The German version here adds: "of weapons already in part confiscated".

In a general war, owing to the strategic position, these vast armaments [*sic*] would have been pointed to Germany's heart. These figures also proved that Czechoslovakia held the record of the per capita armament of its population.

DR. SCHMIDT

### No. 53

1069/437066

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 251

BERLIN, March 20, 1939.

Pol. IV 2040.

The Hungarian Minister<sup>1</sup> today handed me the enclosed letter<sup>2</sup> for the Foreign Minister concerning the occupation of and assumption of sovereignty over the Carpatho-Ukraine. The letter states that Hungary intends to negotiate direct with Rumania and Slovakia on the frontier question.

The letter is attached.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Döme Sztójay.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1969/437967); the substance of the letter is given in the memorandum here printed.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "U.St.S. It seems to me that an acknowledgement of receipt is indicated. W[eizsäcker] 20/[3]." (ii) "L.R. Siegfried. Is an answer necessary? E. K[ordt] 21/3."

### No. 54

2791/547008

#### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, March 20, 1939.

zu W VI 1046.<sup>1</sup>

Submitted to Herr Dir. Wiehl through the State Secretary.

The Reich Foreign Minister asks us not to agree for the time being to any fresh British initiative for a later visit by Oliver Stanley and Hudson<sup>2</sup> and to notify the Reich Ministry of Economics as well as the Embassy in London accordingly.

ERICH KORDT

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2791/547901-07).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 11.

## No. 55

100/65629-39

*Foreign Minister Ribbentrop to Foreign Minister Ciano*<sup>1</sup>

PERSONAL

BERLIN, March 20, 1939.

MY DEAR CIANO: I should like to take advantage of the first moment of leisure I have had since my return from Prague and Vienna to thank you first of all most sincerely for the sympathetic and friendly attitude which your Government have adopted towards recent events. I am firmly convinced that our action, which has finally established tranquillity and order on the South-East frontier of the Reich, constitutes a substantial strengthening of the Rome-Berlin Axis and that this effect will be more and more clearly revealed in the course of further developments. I can quite understand that the rapid progress of the action and its result came to a certain extent as a surprise to you, as you recently hinted to Herr von Mackensen.<sup>2</sup> When, to the surprise even of ourselves, matters came to a head in recent weeks, the Führer's decisions had to be made very quickly and without the opportunity for lengthy preparations. However, I kept Ambassador Attolico constantly informed, in so far as this was possible under the pressure of stormy events, and was also glad to be able to give detailed information to your former Minister in Prague.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, I am anxious today to give you clear and definite information as to our attitude towards the Croat question which you mentioned to Herr von Mackensen. You are acquainted with the Führer's decision that in all Mediterranean questions the policy of the Axis is to be determined by Rome and that therefore Germany would never pursue a policy independent of that of Italy in the Mediterranean countries. This decision of the Führer's will always be an immutable law of our foreign policy. Just as the Duce declared his *désintéressement* in Czechia, we ourselves are disinterested in the Croat question and, if we acted at all in this matter, it would only be in the closest cooperation with Italian wishes. It came therefore as a complete surprise to me that, according to information from Herr von Mackensen, rumours

<sup>1</sup> In a top secret and urgent telegram, No. 103 of Mar. 21 (583/242045), Mackensen reported with reference to instructions transmitted by Senior Counsellor Kordt that day: "At 1:30 p.m. I handed Ciano the text of the letter transmitted to me by telephone and, as his knowledge of German is not sufficient, I translated the letter orally sentence by sentence. The way in which Ciano expressed his thanks, made his satisfaction with the contents of the letter clearly apparent. In accordance with instructions Attolico will receive copies on his arrival here."

"With reference to my suggestion to Senior Counsellor Kordt over the telephone I would leave it to your discretion to instruct the Belgrade Legation to preserve the utmost restraint in dealing with the Croat question, with reference to their report forwarded to me with your despatch of March 17—Pol. IV 1611." [vol. v of this Series, document No. 310, which was forwarded to Rome under a cover note by Heinburg of the same date (not printed, 2130/465309-10).]

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Francesco Frasoni.

to the contrary concerning this have reached your ears and I at once made an investigation personally to discover what the basis for these rumours might be. I thus ascertained that about a month ago some Croat personalities had called at an unofficial agency here in Berlin<sup>4</sup> and had endeavoured to obtain detailed information about Germany's attitude. This unofficial agency left the Croat visitors in no doubt at all that independent German activity in this matter was absolutely out of the question and that, on the contrary, Germany would always let her attitude be guided by Italy's intentions and wishes. I communicated these and other details to Attolico orally today before his departure. It may have been that, as often happens in the case of visits by such politicians, the Croats sought contact with other non-responsible agencies as well. I will investigate this and put a stop once and for all to anything which might possibly give rise to false rumours about Germany's intentions, or to misunderstandings.

Incidentally, I again gave Attolico detailed information about all topical questions today and have just been with him to the Führer,<sup>5</sup> who in turn gave his views for the Duce and yourself on the questions which principally concern Italy.

I should be grateful if you would bring the contents of this letter to the notice of the Duce also and convey my most sincere greetings to him.

With best wishes I am, my dear Ciano,

Yours etc.;

RIBBENTROP<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> This may refer to a Croat approach reported to the Foreign Ministry by a member of the staff of the Führer's Deputy in a letter of Feb. 14, Pol. IV 1286 (not printed, 2481/517725-28).

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 52.

<sup>6</sup> See also Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 420-22.

## No. 56

6402/E474892-03

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 96 of March 21

WASHINGTON, March 21, 1939—3:41 p.m.

Received March 22—12:45 a.m.

W VIII a 639.

With reference to my telegram No. 92 of March 18.<sup>1</sup>

1) From discussions with New York banks and with exporters and importers interested in trade with Germany, no effective protests are

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 33. A further report, No. 535/W, on the same subject was sent by Thomsen on Mar. 21 (not printed, 2422/511733-34). In this he attributes the imposition of countervailing duties to direct instructions from the President.

to be expected from these circles against the imposition of "countervailing duties",<sup>2</sup> on account of the political nature of this measure and anti-German public opinion. Importers will attempt to bring in as many goods as possible before April 23 and will then if necessary turn to other sources of supply. The National Importers' Council also reached a decision yesterday to this effect.

2) German counter-measures should, for reasons of expediency, be unobtrusively applied since the American Government might possibly retaliate with penalty duties and an embargo pursuant to section 338. It would be desirable, however, that the utmost publicity should be given to the fact that the contraction of German exports caused by the American measures will of necessity lead to a considerable decline in the German import of American products, particularly of agricultural ones.

3) The Treasury decision practically puts an end to the Inland Account procedure<sup>3</sup> in any form, as it regards the payment of any premium on American products as a subsidy and, in view of the control of German imports and exports, no longer recognizes the German internal market price as a "current fair open market price".<sup>2</sup> The continuance of Inland Account is therefore useless as the additional duty would render the German premium illusory; as, furthermore, the present 25 per cent additional duty on all dutiable German goods has been imposed regardless of whether the transaction has been carried out by means of Inland Account or provides for a purely foreign exchange settlement. Since two thirds of the total imports from Germany has, to begin with, a charge of at least an additional 25 per cent imposed upon it, I recommend complete abolition of Inland Account procedure and cancellation of all relevant circulars (excepting in the case of those shipments of goods which have been declared to customs authorities in U.S. ports before April 23, and also in as far as payment is to be made only later). The importer cannot reckon on repayment of the additional duty when making price calculations, as it is completely uncertain when such repayment will take place and how much he will have to expend on adducing proofs. The attempt should then be made to bring about the removal of the present 25 per cent additional duty before April 23 through import circles here on the basis of documentary proof that Inland Account procedure had been discontinued. The Schröder Bank's customs attorney is already negotiating on their behalf in order to free from the present additional duty transactions unquestionably put through against dollars or free reichsmarks.

4) As the only immediate possibilities for the promotion of exports there remain pure barter transactions without premiums, and payment

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 33, footnote 6.

from originally owned blocked accounts (original and continuous ownerships).<sup>2</sup> With regard to the latter, it may well be in the first place a question of large balances accumulated from [American] deliveries of goods and [German payment of] dividends, such as those of American motor manufacturers (General Motors). Such transactions must be entered into and carried out with the greatest circumspection in view of the United States Attorney General's opinion of June 2, 1936,<sup>4</sup> now again cited. For this purpose the employment of reliable agents well acquainted with the relevant conditions here appears expedient (Continental).<sup>5</sup> Concrete proposals are being drafted here by customs attorneys. For final decisions I request that the commercial experts at the Embassy should be summoned to Berlin to report and that in no circumstances should special sanction be granted beforehand.

5) The Embassy will for the present make no use of the authorization in telegram No. 79.<sup>6</sup>

6) Carpatho-Ukraine is being treated as *de facto* Hungarian territory according to the Treasury order of March 18, and, with Hungary, enjoys most-favoured-nation status including tariff concessions under the Czech-American Trade Agreement of 1938.

THOMSEN

<sup>4</sup> In this opinion the American Attorney General held that certain methods developed by Germany for promoting exports (so-called "scrip" and "bond" practices, "Ask marks" and "compensation procedure") called for the imposition of countervailing duties under section 303 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (not printed 6416/E478544-51). Acting on this opinion, the Treasury Department issued a decision on June 4 imposing countervailing duties on certain imports from Germany (not printed 6416/E478560-62). Thereupon the German Government notified the U.S. Government that, with effect from Aug. 3, 1936, these methods would be discontinued in respect of dutiable German exports to the U.S.A. (not printed, 6968/E522280-81).

<sup>5</sup> According to a communication from the Ministry of Economics to the Foreign Ministry dated Aug. 27, 1937 (not printed, 7483/E540409-12), the Continental Export and Import Corporation had been founded on Mar. 17, 1937, with a capital of \$300,000, a substantial part of which had been put up by the Schroeder Banking Corporation of New York. The Corporation was described as under mixed German-American management.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (6402/E474879-80). This telegram of Mar. 17 gave detailed instructions regarding desirable German purchases in the United States.

## No. 57

100/65610

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 125 of March 21

BERLIN, March 21, 1939—9:10 p.m.

Received March—9:30 p.m.

For the Ambassador. Secret.

We have requested Colonel General Keitel to state, through an instruction to the Military Attaché in Rome,<sup>1</sup> that he is ready for the

<sup>1</sup> Col. Enno von Rintelen.

immediate opening of the General Staff discussions already mentioned<sup>2</sup> and to enquire what date would suit the Italian General Staff. (Word missing) an approach to the Italian General Staff is desirable as a friendly gesture for political reasons also, particularly at the present moment.

Please report progress by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 461 and 462. A number of documents on the German-Italian Staff talks were selected from the archives of the German Admiralty after editorial work on this volume had started. This selection is printed as Appendix I to this volume.

No. 58

1625/339372-73

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, March 21, 1939—9:30 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 833.

According to information to hand here, the British Government have undertaken *démarches* in a number of capitals so as to bring about an association of "peaceful Powers" against further German expansion. In particular, the British Government are said to have approached all the States adjacent to Rumania and to several other Powers in order to ascertain how far these are prepared to take measures against an attack on Rumania.<sup>2</sup> The present reports do not indicate clearly whether two distinct *démarches* are here involved. Chamberlain and Halifax stated in Parliament on March 20<sup>3</sup> that, on account of recent events, Britain has entered into consultation with other Powers (among whom Halifax also mentioned the Dominions). Furthermore, according to press reports, the Soviet Union has replied by proposing a conference to which the Soviet Union, Britain, France, Poland, Rumania and other Balkan States would be invited.

Please give this matter your attention and use sources available to find out the text of the British enquiry and the answers given by the

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Embassies at Paris, Rome, Warsaw, Moscow, Ankara, Brussels, Washington; the Legations at Dublin, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo, Helsinki, Bucharest, Belgrade, Sofia, Budapest, Lisbon, Cape Town, the Consulate at Geneva, and the Consulates-General at Ottawa and Sydney.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. IV, chapter V.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 48, footnote 1.

Powers. In conversation please refer to press reports and do not allow it to be seen that you are acting on official instructions.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>4</sup> The text of this telegram was repeated on Mar. 21 as telegram No. 90 (1625/388374) to the Embassy in London with the addition of a final sentence: "with reference to your telegram No. 81 of March 21 [i.e., document No. 48] please keep this matter also in mind at your end."

No. 59

1593/384233-39

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE  
No. 50

BERLIN, March 21, 1939—9:45 p.m.  
zu Pol. VII 450.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 47 of March 15.<sup>1</sup>

Please inform the Turkish Government: We have heard that the conclusion of a Franco-Turkish mutual assistance pact is being discussed in connection with the question of the union of Hatay with Turkey. This news is extremely displeasing to us, as negotiations of that type sharply contradict the express assurances repeatedly given to us by Turkey that she would pursue a policy of strict neutrality towards all Great Powers.

Please refer in particular to the various unequivocal statements made by Numan, the Secretary General, to the Reich Foreign Minister (July 1 and 7, 1938)<sup>2</sup> and to the State Secretary (July 6, 1938 and February 10, 1939).<sup>3</sup> In the conversation of July 1, 1938, Numan had, in the presence of Ambassador Hamdi, given an assurance that Turkey had always evaded France's efforts for the conclusion of an *assistance mutuelle* and would also reject it in the future. Turkey would take no part in any combination directed against Germany. In the further conversations referred to this assurance was renewed and confirmed.

We expect that Turkey will also in future adhere to these solemn assurances.

Report by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 548 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 548, footnote 2, and document No. 560.



## No. 60

429/218675-76

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

BERLIN, March 21, 1939.

Pol. VI 672 g.

The following is for your strictly confidential information:

Recently the Finnish Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> told Minister von Blücher in strict confidence that Soviet Russia was showing remarkable interest in the Finnish archipelago between Hogland (Suursaari) and Leningrad. Litvinov had suggested to the Finnish Minister in Moscow<sup>2</sup> the exchange of this archipelago for territories in East Carelia. The Finnish Government had refused, whereupon Litvinov had further proposed that Finland should lease the archipelago to Russia. At the same time, Litvinov promised renewed agreement to the fortification of Hogland. This proposal Finland also rejected. Litvinov thereupon replied that he would not regard this answer as final.

In the meantime, the Soviet Russian Ambassador in Rome, Stein, had arrived in Helsinki, and wanted to speak to the Finnish Foreign Minister. The Finnish Government would not consider the Russian offers concerning the archipelago. If Russia occupied these islands in time of war, Finland would hardly be able to prevent this, but a voluntary cession of Finnish territory in peace time was out of the question. There was a possibility, however, that Finland would reach an agreement with the Soviet Government by means of an exchange of Notes, that in the event of a general war, Finland would remain neutral.

Herr von Blücher concluded this conversation with the remark that if the Russians established themselves on the islands in peace time, this would mean military control of Finland by the Soviet Union, but that Finnish neutrality in case of war seemed to him the expedient policy.<sup>3</sup>

We are in agreement with the language held by Herr von Blücher.

By order:

GRUNDHERR

<sup>1</sup> Elias Erkko.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Aarno Yrjö-Koskinen.

<sup>3</sup> In a further despatch, Pol. VI 797g of Apr. 1, signed by Grundherr (429/218674), the Embassy at Moscow were informed as follows: "According to what Minister von Blücher has heard from the Finnish Foreign Minister, the reason for the recall of the Finnish trade delegation from Moscow is that the Russians tried to secure, simultaneously with the trade agreement, the cession of the Finnish islands between Hogland and Leningrad and a 20 year lease of the island of Hogland to Russia."

## No. 61

F8/0052-57

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup>*

RM 17

BERLIN, March 21, 1939.

I invited Lipski, the Polish Ambassador, to call on me at noon today. I began by describing to M. Lipski the development of the Czecho-Slovak question and explained to him that, in view of the rush of events, it had not been possible for me to keep foreign representatives here informed as I would have liked to do. I had, however, given Ambassador von Moltke, who happened to be in Berlin, detailed information and instructed him for his part to put Foreign Minister Beck in the picture. I then described in detail the events which had induced the Führer to intervene.

It had struck us that the Beneš spirit had again stirred in Rump Czecho-Slovakia. All the Führer's warnings to Chvalkovský had fallen on deaf ears. Recently the Prague Government had tried to adopt dictatorial methods in Carpatho-Ukraine and in Slovakia. The oppression of the Germans in the linguistic enclaves had begun again. I assumed that the settlement which had in the meantime been achieved in the Carpatho-Ukraine question had caused the greatest satisfaction in Poland. The establishment of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia meant a final pacification of this area which was compatible with historical principles and would benefit everybody in the end.

Ambassador Lipski then expressed anxiety at the fact that Germany had assumed the protection of Slovakia. This news had hit Poland hard, for the man in the street could only regard such a step as being primarily directed against Poland. The Slovaks were a people linguistically related [to Poland]. History also played a part in determining Polish interests in this area and from a purely realistic political standpoint it must be admitted that the declaration of protection could only be regarded as a blow against Poland.

I referred Ambassador Lipski to the fact that the independent Slovak Government had appealed to Germany for protection. The declaration of protection was certainly not directed against Poland. At this point I gave a slight hint that the question could perhaps at some time be the subject of joint discussions if German-Polish relations in general developed satisfactorily. Unfortunately, however, I could not but note that a gradual stiffening in German-Polish relations was becoming apparent. This trend had already begun several months ago. It had struck us here what a peculiar attitude Poland had adopted in

<sup>1</sup> See also the Republic of Poland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs; *Official Documents concerning Polish-German and Polish-Soviet Relations, 1933-1939*. (Published by authority of the Polish Government, London, [1940]) hereinafter cited as the *Polish White Book*, No. 61.

the Minorities Commission.<sup>2</sup> The incidents in Danzig, provoked by Polish students, had also given us food for thought.<sup>3</sup> Ambassador Lipski denied most energetically that such incidents had been caused by Polish students. When I observed that in the Führer's opinion the banners which had led to the clashes had been displayed by Polish students, M. Lipski disputed this most vigorously and maintained that Polish students had been in no way implicated.

I further drew the Polish Ambassador's attention to the continuous press attacks, to the anti-German demonstrations on the occasion of the Ciano visit<sup>4</sup> and to the open press feud which existed at present. This press feud seemed to me entirely unwarranted. The Führer had always worked for a settlement and an understanding with Poland. Even now the Führer was still pursuing this aim. However, the Führer was becoming increasingly amazed at Poland's attitude. Hitherto I had restrained the German press on the question of Poland, as the Polish Ambassador could ascertain for himself by glancing at the German newspapers. However, it would not be possible for me to continue to let such attacks pass unanswered. From such a mutual press feud a state of affairs might soon develop in which our relations would be reduced to nil. It seemed to me essential that a fresh attempt should be made to bring German-Polish policy on to the right lines, and it seemed to me right and fitting that there should be a personal discussion between German and Polish statesmen in the near future.

I would be glad if Foreign Minister Beck would pay an early visit to Berlin. The Führer had told me that he too would warmly welcome such a discussion. As to details of the possible subjects of discussion, I told M. Lipski first of all that he must admit that Germany was not without her share in the creation and the present existence of Poland. If at Brest Litovsk, for example, Germany had pursued a different policy with Russia, there would be no Poland today. Under the Schleicher Government<sup>5</sup> too, there had been the possibility that a Marxist Germany would ally herself with the Soviet Union. In that case too Poland would hardly exist today. The basis on which German-Polish understanding could rest would only be provided by German and Polish nationalists. Poland must realize clearly that she could not take a middle course. Either Poland would remain a national State, working for a reasonable relationship with Germany and her Führer, or one day there would arise a Marxist Polish Government, which would then be absorbed by Bolshevist Russia. We most honestly desired that Poland should retain a strong National Government, as represented by Marshal Pilsudski's group of Colonels.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 125 and also vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 132 and 134.

<sup>3</sup> See also vol. v of this Series, document No. 131.

<sup>4</sup> Ciano visited Poland Feb. 25-Mar. 1, 1939. See vol. v of this Series, document No. 136, and also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of Feb. 25.

<sup>5</sup> Gen. Kurt von Schleicher was Chancellor of the Reich, Dec. 5, 1932-Jan. 29, 1933.

The best chance of reaching understanding with Poland lay with this group. For her present geographical position Poland was indebted to the major disaster of Germany's having lost the war. The geographical solution so favourable to Poland also derived from this fact.

The Corridor settlement was generally felt to be the heaviest burden of the Versailles Treaty for Germany. No previous Government had been in a position to renounce German revisionist claims without being swept away by the Reichstag within forty-eight hours. The Führer had other ideas about the problem of the Corridor. He recognized the justification of the Polish claim to free access to the sea. He was the only German statesman who could pronounce a final renunciation of the Corridor. The condition for this, however, was the return of the purely German Danzig to the Reich as well as the establishment of extra-territorial rail and road connections between the Reich and East Prussia. Only this would remove the thorn in the flesh which the existence of the Corridor represented for the German people. If Polish statesmen would calmly take into account the real facts, a solution could be found on the following basis:

The return of Danzig to the Reich, extra-territorial rail and road connections between East Prussia and the Reich and, in return, a German guarantee for the Corridor. I could well imagine that in such circumstances it would be possible to deal with the Slovak question to the satisfaction of all.

Ambassador Lipski had little to say in reply to this. However, he once again expressed his anxiety over the German declaration of protection for Slovakia. I told Ambassador Lipski once again that Danzig would certainly return to the Reich sooner or later. A common German-Polish policy could also prove very fruitful in future. The treatment which we had accorded to the Ukraine question showed how loyal Germany's attitude was. From the disappointment expressed by the Ukrainians he could see how straightforward was our policy. As I had once assured Foreign Minister Beck in Warsaw<sup>6</sup> we were prepared to regard the Ukrainian question from a purely Polish angle.

Ambassador Lipski promised to inform Foreign Minister Beck and to report immediately.

I suggested that Ambassador Lipski should go to Warsaw and make a personal report. I again repeated how advantageous a final settlement between Germany and Poland seemed to me, particularly at the present juncture. This was also important because hitherto the Führer had felt nothing but amazement over Poland's strange attitude on a number of questions; it was important that he should not form the impression that Poland simply was not willing.

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>6</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 126.

## No. 62

1848/421060

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 254

BERLIN, March 21, 1939.

I have today again urgently pointed out to Reich Minister Funk by telephone the political importance of a friendly gesture to Italy as regards delivery of coke and coal.<sup>1</sup> Herr Funk complained vehemently of our own deficit and of the expected drop in steel supplies—particularly of such steel as we required for Italy—since the delivery of coke to Lorraine had been reduced. However, he promised to review the matter and will do his best.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 44.

<sup>2</sup> A marginal note reads: "Cf. [St.S.] No. 201 [vol. iv of this Series, No. 457] and [St.S.] No. 256 [not printed, 1848/421062]". In the latter memorandum, Weizsäcker recorded that on Mar. 22 he had explained to Magistrati the reasons for the deficit to date and declared that both the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Economics were determined to make every effort to meet the Italian needs. In a telegram to Rome (not printed, 2058/447913-14) on the same day, the following delivery figures were given: January—415,000 tons of coal, February—535,000 tons, March (up to 21st)—386,000 tons. The Coal Syndicate expected to deliver a total of 590,000 to 600,000 tons in March. In a memorandum of Apr. 1 (not printed, 2058/447917), Wiehl stated that this total would be adhered to.

## No. 63

2894/565385-56

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, March 21, 1939.

Pol. VI 868.

The Bulgarian Minister called on me today and first of all congratulated me on the events of the last few days. He then asked me for information on the general situation, especially in the Balkans.

I gave him as much information as was possible today. He received with visible regret my intimation that the news of German aggressive intentions on Rumania was a pure invention. He then again expressed, even though only in very general terms, Bulgaria's desire to keep in contact with us so as not to miss the right moment for the realization of her own national desires.

M. Draganov then asked me to interest myself in the question of the arms credit.<sup>1</sup> It was his conviction that the increase in the amount of the credit from 20 to 45 million was perfectly feasible, especially in consequence of the augmentation which we had received from the Bohemian-Moravian war industry.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 17.

I told him that though I would willingly interest myself in the question, I must leave it to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl and the negotiating delegation.

The Minister did not know whether a British *démarche* had been undertaken in Sofia regarding participation in a combination directed against Germany. -

The Minister then took up the question of Memel.<sup>2</sup> He had gained the impression from his conversations with the Lithuanian Minister here that Lithuania was ready to hand over the Memel territory if she received for her investments in the port of Memel a considerable sum of money with which she could build a new harbour further to the north.

WOERMANN

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 80.

### No. 64

4011/058741

*Counsellor of Embassy Wühlisch to Senior Counsellor Schliep*

WARSAW, March 21, 1939.

DEAR SCHLIEP: We have the impression here more and more that Biddle, the American Ambassador here, exercises an unfavourable influence on Polish policy. Mr. Biddle has the ear of Beck to a very considerable extent, and is a tool of Bullitt, the well-known American Ambassador in Paris, who is causing quite enough harm in any case. Biddle telephones Bullitt daily. As the telephone passes through Berlin it might be possible to listen in to these conversations.

Regards and Heil Hitler!

Yours,

W[ÜHLISCH]

### No. 65

533/230013

*The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 37 of March 22

ROME, March 22, 1939—10:35 a.m.

Received March 22—1:15 p.m.

For confidential information. I learn from a well-informed source that urgent attempts have been made, especially on the French side, to prevail upon the Pope to associate himself with the protests of the democratic States against the annexation of Bohemia and Moravia to the Reich. The Pope has declined these requests very firmly. He has given those around him to understand that he sees no reason to interfere in historic processes in which, from the political point of view, the Church is not interested.

BERGEN

## No. 66

2889/584695

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 98 of March 22

WASHINGTON, March 22, 1939—12:59 p.m.

Received March 22—9:25 p.m.

Mr. Suma, the Japanese Counsellor of Embassy, told me in confidence that he had been reliably informed that the British have sounded the "State" and "Navy Departments"<sup>1</sup> as to whether they could reckon on American support, and if so, as to what extent in the event of an acute conflict developing between Britain and Japan over Hongkong. The British had stated in this connection that they were determined not to give up Hongkong without a struggle. The American answer had been completely negative.

This coincides with my own observations, according to which the American Government will avoid everything which would bring them into open conflict with Japan. The extent and importance of any military activity by America centred on Europe will be determined by the latent threat to her western flank by Japan, in other words, the danger that while engaged in a European conflict, she might behind her back be cut off by Japan from supplies of the most important raw materials and have her Pacific possessions overrun.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 67

2771/586878

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 56 of March 22

ANKARA, March 22, 1939—2:30 p.m.

Received March 22—6:05 p.m.

The Bulgarian Minister President<sup>1</sup> received me yesterday before his journey home in order to acquaint me with the results of the conversations held during his visit here. The salient points may be summarized as follows:

1. The Minister President had informed the Turks in unambiguous terms that Bulgaria was ready to guarantee the existing Turco-Bulgarian, and Yugoslav-Bulgarian frontiers, but not Bulgaria's present

<sup>1</sup> Gheorghi Kiosseivanov.

frontiers with Rumania and Greece. Bulgaria declined now as before to enter the Balkan Pact<sup>2</sup> without previous frontier revision. He had, moreover, frankly informed Ismet, the Turkish President, that in his view the Balkan Pact would break up at the first test.

2. Bulgaria regarded the Dobruja question<sup>3</sup> as urgent and admitting of little further delay. K[iosseivanov] had asked the Turks what they would do if Bulgaria took steps against Rumania; whether, in particular, obligations under the Balkan Pact (defence obligations) had priority over obligations under the Turco-Bulgarian Friendship Pact<sup>4</sup> (non-aggression obligations). The Turks had on the first day acknowledged these obligations under the Balkan Pact; on the following day, obviously after consultation with the British Ambassador,<sup>5</sup> this view had been modified to the extent that the question of Turkey's attitude remained open. The Turkish Government requested, however, that, should Bulgaria intend to intervene in Rumania, she should previously consult them.

3. The Minister President told me that he had received news that Germany had offered Rumania a guarantee of her present frontiers in return for the fulfilment of her [Germany's] petroleum demands. He could not believe this news was correct. For Bulgaria well knew that without German help she must abandon her national aspirations. Bulgaria, on the other hand, was ready to cooperate with Germany in political and economic fields still more closely than heretofore, if that were possible. The Minister President requested me with emotion to transmit to the Reich Government the Bulgarian plea for support in their national demands.

KROLL

<sup>2</sup> The Pact between Greece, Rumania, Turkey and Yugoslavia constituting a Balkan Entente, signed at Athens, Feb. 9, 1934. For the text see *British and Foreign State Papers* (London, H.M. Stationery Office, *in progress*) (hereinafter cited as *B.F.S.P.*), vol. 137, pp. 496-499.

<sup>3</sup> Bulgaria laid claim to the Southern Dobruja ceded to Rumania after the Second Balkan War by the Treaty of Bucharest in 1913, re-ceded to Bulgaria when Rumania concluded a separate peace in 1918, and re-ceded to Rumania by the Treaty of Neuilly in 1919.

<sup>4</sup> The Treaty of Friendship between Bulgaria and Turkey, signed at Ankara, Oct. 18, 1925. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 122, pp. 213-217.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen.

## No. 68

169/82506

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 104

BERLIN, March 22, 1939—10:25 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. IV 696 g.

Reports constantly coming in convey the impression here that Rumanian military measures have more than a purely security character



and appear to amount to a total mobilization of the Rumanian Army. The reason for this is not apparent. We therefore request that the Rumanian Government be asked, without any particularly urgent interest being displayed, about the cause and significance of these measures.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "N.B. this telegram is based on information received from Pol[itical Department] I M[ilitary Questions]."

## No. 69

621/250750-54

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

A 1197

PARIS, March 22, 1939.

Received March 23.

Pol. II 875.

I have the honour to submit herewith a German confidential agent's memorandum on a conversation which he had on March 20 with Flandin, the former Minister President. Flandin's statements correspond by and large with the views, heard elsewhere also, of those French circles which have hitherto championed a settlement with Germany and which, especially during the Czech crisis of September 1938, intervened energetically for the maintenance of peace.

There definitely exists a desire in these circles to overcome the crisis in German-French relations—as is also expressed in Flandin's statements—even though at present the hope of doing so is small.

BRÄUER

[Enclosure]

Copy

## CONVERSATION WITH PIERRE-ETIENNE FLANDIN

Flandin, the former Minister President, displayed considerable pessimism regarding German-French future prospects during our conversation which lasted about an hour. He said, by way of introduction, that he did not understand the action against former Czecho-Slovakia. "My political friends and I have sought in vain to find a logical explanation for Hitler's motives. I find this political action the less comprehensible since it was carried out just at a moment when the efforts of the advocates of a German-French understanding began to show concrete results. In my opinion the German authority over the Czech State was so strong and undisputed that the protectorate of Slovakia appears to be as superfluous as the annexation of Czechia. In any case the gain is in no wise proportionate to the

loss which Germany has suffered through the interruption of the economic negotiations,<sup>1</sup> and through the complete abandonment of all projects of international cooperation."

Flandin then quoted the general moral arguments which were being brought forward by most Frenchmen at the present time. The new crisis through loss of confidence was, in his opinion, no temporary manifestation, but was decidedly serious, deep-seated and lasting. Flandin received with considerable scepticism my plea that, after a few months, public opinion would calm down, and the plans for German-French cooperation could surely be resumed. "I do not believe that we are faced with a mere setback which, after some months, as you say, may be overcome. I have rather the impression that something is broken which can hardly be repaired. And this is particularly distressing to me. Certainly I am no prophet. Perhaps something will happen in the future which will give us new points of contact, but it will have to be something 'big'. For the moment the bridges are broken and our public opinion will have nothing to do with Germany. Even if the Reich Chancellor, Hitler, were to give an assurance tomorrow that he had no intentions of annexing, or of taking under his protection, other eastern or southeastern States of Europe, there would be hardly anyone among us who would believe these words. The seizure of former Czecho-Slovakia has produced the conviction in France—as it has in British public opinion—that the Germans are just a people striving for the hegemony of Europe, and that the brutal urge of conquest is in their blood. Believe me, the blow against Czecho-Slovakia has simply reduced twenty years' work for understanding to absurdity."

If the newly created situation were looked at soberly and objectively, and all those trends were considered which, at the moment, were agitating Europe anew, then in the last analysis, there was no way out to be seen except war—even though it is not fitting to describe war as a "way out". Certainly there could at the present time be no thought of becoming involved in war; but were not the crisis through loss of confidence, the shock to public opinion and the measures which the Governments felt obliged to take, calculated to hasten a "recourse to arms"?

I here objected that Germany's strategic position in respect of France and Great Britain was very favourable. I referred to Britain's manpower and war material, her limited possibilities, etc., and made no secret of the fact that, in the view of my German acquaintances, all measures against the German Reich, such as the recall of Ambassadors,<sup>2</sup> etc., were regarded as wasted efforts, and that in general it was ob-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 25.

served with regret that France, and Britain as well, would achieve nothing by these methods, and merely ran the danger of suffering a loss of prestige.

Flandin replied to this as follows: "I fear that Germany is indulging in an illusion in this respect. The democracies, especially the British democracy, react very slowly, but if once the British have decided to act, then nothing can hold them back. I do not regard the British plan of calling something like a reduced League of Nations into being as a *quantité négligeable*. I also believe that economic warfare directed against Germany may inflict very considerable damage on the Reich." Flandin pointed out to me, in a lengthy exposition, the psychological repercussions of the annexation in London and in Paris, and he repeatedly laid particular stress on the positive work done by the advocates of a *rapprochement* during recent months. If people in France—as also in Britain—had been prepared to forget the past, the pre-war period and the war years, this had resulted from the conviction that in Germany a new generation with a new and healthier mentality had grown up. The blow against Czecho-Slovakia had destroyed this good will with lightning rapidity. All the things which had outraged the British sense of justice such as, for instance, the violation of Belgian neutrality, etc., re-emerged from the past, and were used as proofs that the mentality of the Germans had in no wise changed; that, in attaining their aims of hegemony, they had no scruples, and that the assurances of Germans must not be believed because they do not keep their word: the new generation no more than their fathers did.

I expressed the view to M. Flandin that it would appear to me more rational if the newly-created situation, which was after all unalterable, were regarded less from the psychological angle than from that of political realism. Fundamentally, Munich had been a division of spheres of interest; hence it was hardly comprehensible to a German that such a clamour should be raised in Britain and France over the German action.

Flandin: "Pardon me, that is a great mistake. There is not one word in the Munich Agreement to the effect that a division of spheres of interest was intended. Germany has never declared herself ready to renounce her colonial demands in Africa. On the contrary: Herr Hitler is still vigorously supporting Italy's African claims! And the annexation of Czecho-Slovakia has, in my opinion, by no means secured for the Reich that economic equilibrium which could enable her to base herself successfully on autarky in the future. Perhaps I am wrong, but I hardly think so. The former Czecho-Slovakia has a highly developed industry which depends upon sources of raw materials. Germany will have to hunt for markets with increased energy, and the food problem may well involve the Reich in new difficulties. I am therefore—as I have said—convinced that Herr Hitler cannot think of

renouncing his colonial claims; rather it can be assumed that they will continue to be urged even more vigorously. In view of this, therefore, the opinion expressed by some journalists and politicians without responsibility that Munich was intended to give the Germans a free hand in the East, while France was left to concentrate on her Empire, cannot be maintained." Flandin emphasized in this connection that it had always appeared to him normal and supportable that a Germany, renewed in strength, should turn economically towards the East and South-East. He had always been in favour of this tendency although he was conscious of the fact that this economic advance must naturally displace the non-German Powers, and injure French and British industry. "Today, however, we are confronted with a changed situation. It is no longer a problem of economic penetration but manifestly of political hegemony also. The British will attempt to save what they can in the economic field; this will damage Germany and will, over and above it, nurture fresh political tension. For this reason, and also for other considerations, the success of the annexation seems to me to be more than problematic for the German Reich."

Once more the former Minister President began to speak of psychological matters: In his view the situation would not have been so grave by far if the German Reich Chancellor had notified the French and British Governments two days before the annexation; if he had at least attempted to explain his motives and to give expression to the fact that he had found himself obliged to take action. Certainly, objections would have been raised and there would have been no lack of protests, but the psychological shock would not have been so great. One would not have had the impression of having been struck in the face. Flandin countered my remark that there was, in the German-French Declaration,<sup>3</sup> no provision for consultation in such an eventuality, by saying that the Reich would indubitably have intervened immediately if France had, in answer to the wishes of Catalonia, assumed a protectorate over this Spanish province. If Paris had presented the Reich with a *fait accompli*, on the plea that this matter did not concern Germany, Berlin would not only have felt injured, but would have replied with an intervention of its own.

Only something really "big" could overcome the present crisis.

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<sup>3</sup> Of Dec. 6, 1938. See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 369.

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[EDITORS' NOTE. On March 23, Hitler landed in Memel. Documents dealing with the events which led to the German-Lithuanian Treaty of March 22, 1939, and the cession of Memel will be found in volume V of this Series, chapter III.]

## No. 70

174/135900

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 121 of March 23

Tokyo, March 23, 1939—7:00 p.m.

Received March 23—6:10 p.m.

For the State Secretary.

I hear from a well-informed Japanese press source that, after deliberating for several hours, the Japanese Five Minister Conference,<sup>1</sup> under the chairmanship of the Minister President, decided at two o'clock this morning to open diplomatic negotiations with Germany for the purpose of concluding a military alliance directed against Russia. Sections of the Army had recommended a more far-reaching military pact also against third Powers. The Italian Government have demanded the same. The Navy advised limiting it to Russia. Ambassador Oshima is said to have forwarded an enquiry from the German Government whether Japan wished to conclude a military alliance.<sup>2</sup> Allegedly, Germany had also been agreeable to a purely anti-Russian pact and had requested a reply by April 3.<sup>3</sup> Despite the alliance, the Government here do not intend to destroy the bridge with America and Britain, and are said to be considering concessions in China to this end. The morning edition of the newspaper *Asahi* today also mentions a secret conference of Ministers and announces that "an important question of Japanese foreign policy will be decided in a few days' time".

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Consisting of the Minister President, Baron Hiranuma, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Arita, the Minister of War, General Itagaki, the Minister of Marine, Admiral Yonai, and the Minister of Finance, Ishiwata.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note below.

<sup>3</sup> No record of such a request has been found.

[EDITORS' NOTE. No evidence as to the precise nature of the German-Japanese negotiations at this time has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. The Foreign Ministry film of the Büro RAM files on Japan contains none of the drafts listed below and it is clear from volume IV of this Series, document No. 548, and from document No. 270 in this volume, that special secrecy was observed in their case. References to the negotiations will be found in volume IV of this Series, documents Nos. 400, 421, 422, 426, 542, 543 and 546. Some indication as to the nature of the proposals under discussion can be found in the Italian diplomatic documents, as quoted textually in Mario Toscano, *Le Origini del Patto d'Acciaio* (Florence, 1948).

The following drafts are there quoted *verbatim*:

(a) German draft of Tripartite Pact (original text in English, but

quoted by Toscano in Italian) given to Ciano by Ribbentrop at Munich on September 29-30, 1938 (Toscano, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20). An English translation from the Italian is printed in: Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Documents on International Affairs 1939-46*, vol. I (London 1951) pp. 145-146.

(b) German draft of Tripartite Treaty. Text in French, submitted to Oshima, Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, late October 1938 (Toscano, *op. cit.*, pp. 24-26). This is not identical with draft (a) above. Ciano saw this draft on October 27, 1938; see *The Ciano Diaries*, entry of October 27, 1938, and also volume IV of this Series, document No. 400 and Galeazzo Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe* (Milan, 1948) pp. 373-378 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers* (London, 1948) pp. 242-246). See also volume IV of this Series, document No. 421, for the letter of January 2, 1939, from Ciano to Ribbentrop announcing Mussolini's withdrawal of his reservation on Ribbentrop's plan to transform the Anti-Comintern Pact into a pact of military aid.

(c) Draft of Tripartite Pact of Alliance agreed to between Ribbentrop and Oshima, and transmitted by Attolico to Ciano in a personal letter on January 6, 1939 (Toscano, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-56; an English translation of the letter and Secret Protocol is printed in *Documents on International Affairs*, *op. cit.*, pp. 152-155).

The Japanese reply to this draft arrived in Berlin on February 1, 1939, accepting in principle but requesting that modification of details of the draft should be discussed in Berlin, after the arrival of a special commission composed of members of the Japanese Foreign and Navy Ministries (Attolico telegram No. 53 of February 2, 1939, cited in Toscano, *op. cit.*, p. 60).

This commission, consisting of Consul General Ito, of the Foreign Ministry, Lt. Col. Tatsumi, of the General Staff, and Rear Admiral Abe, of the Navy Ministry, arrived in Berlin, via Rome, at the end of February 1939. (See document No. 254, also volume IV of this Series, document No. 547.) For the activities of this commission the following sources in the documents of the International Military Tribunal, Far East (hereinafter cited as IMT FE) may be consulted. Evidence of General Kawabe, Japanese Military Attaché, Berlin, October 1938-February 1940 (IMT FE Transcript of Proceedings on November 21, 1947, pp. 33760 ff.), interrogation record on Hiroshi Oshima, Japanese Military Attaché, Berlin, 1934-38, Japanese Ambassador, Berlin, October 1938-October 1939 (IMT FE document 2156 D, pp. 7-11), Affidavit of Oshima (IMT FE Defence document 2862, Exhibit No. 3508), Affidavit of Uzuhiko Usami, Counsellor to Japanese Embassy, Berlin, November 1938-May 1940 (IMT FE Defence document 2630-Exhibit No. 3494). According to the Affidavit by Usami, the Ito commission brought with them a fourth draft, of which he gives a paraphrase. The purpose of the commission was, according to Oshima

(IMT FE document 2156 D, Interrogation of Oshima, pp. 10-11), to instruct Oshima and Shiratori, Japanese Ambassador in Rome, in the views of the Japanese Government, and not to negotiate directly (see also volume IV of this Series, document No. 547). Lt. Col. Tatsumi, however, seems to have had contact with Ribbentrop (Attolico report No. 1864 of April 4, 1939, cited in Toscano, *op. cit.*, p. 72), but no evidence of this has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives.]

## No. 71

7483/E540436-37

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Embassy  
in the United States*

Telegram

No. 94 of March 23

BERLIN, March 23, 1939—9:30 p.m.  
W VIIIa 601 II.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 89<sup>1</sup> and 95.<sup>2</sup>

I. In accordance with the ordinance of the Minister of the Interior of March 21,<sup>2</sup> based on article 13 of the Führer's decree of March 16,<sup>3</sup> the existing Czecho-Slovak customs duties in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, and the existing customs frontier between the Reich and the Protectorate, will remain in operation until further notice. The date on which the incorporation of the Protectorate in the German customs area will take place, as envisaged in article 9 of the decree, will be determined later.

Under this ordinance the principles and agreements by which economic relations have been carried on up to the present between Czecho-Slovakia and third States will, for the time being, continue to be applied accordingly to economic relations between the Protectorate and third countries, not only in respect of customs duties but in general, in as far as such countries are prepared to reciprocate.<sup>4</sup>

Thus the American Treasury order of March 18, suspending most-favoured treatment for products from Bohemia and Moravia, does not take account of actual conditions.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (350/202306). On Mar. 17, Thomsen telegraphed that the Treasury had announced that, as from Mar. 18, most-favoured-nation treatment would be withdrawn from Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (350/202259); in this telegram of Mar. 20, Thomsen sent the text of the State Department's Note in answer to the German Note of Mar. 17. See also document No. 14.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 246.

<sup>4</sup> Telegrams of instructions on a similar declaration to be made by German Missions accredited to Governments having trade relations with Czecho-Slovakia, were despatched on Mar. 22 (not printed, 8467/E595885-86 and 888-905); excluding Washington and Moscow where special circumstances prevailed, according to information supplied by Glodius on Mar. 23 to certain Reich Ministries (not printed, 8467/E595887). The document here printed is the telegram sent to Washington, but no record of any similar communication to Moscow has been found.

Please inform the [American] Government of the above either orally or in writing, without requesting a reply, so that we shall not be exposed to another refusal, especially after what occurred at the time of the reunion with Austria.<sup>5</sup> Should the American Government themselves declare their readiness to rescind the order of March 18, American imports will be dealt with as heretofore, until the Protectorate is finally incorporated in the German customs territory or other agreements concluded with the American Government.

Please report by telegram on the execution of your *démarche* and, if pertinent, how it is received.

## II. For information only.

(a) We shall wait for about another week for a possible declaration of such readiness, and then, if nothing happens, we shall ourselves put new arrangements into effect and, in particular, shall no longer provide foreign exchange for American imports to the Protectorate, which would practically amount to a complete stoppage of imports.

(b) Suspension of most-favoured nation treatment for Slovak goods is completely unjustified, as Slovakia is an independent State which has not even a customs or currency union with Germany. We leave it to the Slovak Government to make representations on this matter. On the other hand, there are no objections to drawing attention to the facts of the case in conversation.

WIEHL

<sup>5</sup> On Apr. 6, 1938, in a letter to the Secretary of the Treasury (subsequently published in the American press) President Roosevelt had instructed him that, as from May 6, 1938, Austria should be struck off the list of countries enjoying certain reduced rates of duty under trade agreements negotiated under the Trade Agreements Act of 1934. On instructions, Dieckhoff presented a Note of protest from his Government on Apr. 14, 1938, arguing that Austria was still an independent customs territory (despatch from Washington No. 669/W, not printed, 7484/E540423-25). The Secretary of State replied in a Note of Apr. 29, citing evidence that, since the incorporation of Austria, her economy was progressively being assimilated to that of the Reich (not printed, 7484/E540420-22).

## No. 72

1593/354240

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 63 of March 23

ANKARA, March 23, 1939—10:38 p.m.

Received March 24—5:00 a.m.

Pol. VII 503.

With reference to your telegram No. 50 of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

Saracoğlu, the Foreign Minister, has confirmed to me that the French Ambassador here had initially proposed, in the form of a personal

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 59.



suggestion, conversations concerning the union of Hatay with Turkey, and that such conversations had even begun. In this connection, the French had suggested as advantageous the conclusion, in place of the Turco-French agreement signed at the time of the Hatay settlement guaranteeing territorial inviolability in the Hatay area, of a similar treaty of assistance guaranteeing the new Turco-Syrian frontier as constituted heretofore by Hatay. Conversations had not yet progressed very far and their outcome was uncertain. In accordance with declarations repeatedly made to us, Turkey continued to decline the conclusion of a general treaty of assistance with any Great Power whatsoever. I have expressed in all seriousness to the Foreign Minister the confident expectation of the Reich Government that Turkey will continue to pursue also in the future a policy of the strictest neutrality towards the Great Powers and will outwardly avoid even the semblance of a different attitude.

KROLL

## No. 73

118/66409-14

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Poland*Draft Telegram<sup>1</sup>

No.

BERLIN, March . . . , 1939.

For Ambassador personally.

Now that M. Lipski, in accordance with my proposal, has left last night for Warsaw to report orally, please request an interview with M. Beck at once, to put before him again for your part also, in earnest and emphatic terms, our attitude to the present state and future development of German-Polish relations, and to do this in my name and on the lines of my conversation of March 21 with M. Lipski<sup>2</sup> with which you are already acquainted. In doing so please lay particular emphasis on the following points:

1) The Führer considers it of decisive importance that the Danzig question should be solved soon. The development of the general political situation as well as the development of conditions in Danzig itself demand a speedy settlement. We are convinced that a further

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Draft. Cancelled, by order of the Führer." This draft is undated, but evidently relates to Mar. 23 as appears from a note by Weizsäcker of Mar. 24 (97/108311) which reads as follows: "On the evening of March 23 I asked Ambassador von Moltke by telephone provisionally to request an interview with Minister Beck. Herr von Moltke would probably receive detailed instructions in the course of the following day (March 24). These would be along the lines of the conversation held on March 21, between the Reich Foreign Minister and Ambassador Lipski, and in consequence of which Lipski is at present in Warsaw."

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 61.

postponement of the question might very easily lead to a situation which would render at least difficult if not impossible a friendly settlement on the lines of the far-reaching development and intensification of German-Polish relations desired by us.

2) The basic principles of a settlement of the Danzig question envisaged by us have been repeatedly stated to the Polish Government by the Führer as well as by me: Return of Danzig to the Reich, extra-territorial rail and road communications between East Prussia and the Reich, also linking up Danzig; in return, a binding recognition for 25 years, to be laid down by treaty, of the Polish Corridor and the whole of Poland's western frontier. In addition, insofar as the reincorporation of Danzig into the Reich causes economic or technical transport difficulties for Poland, in spite of the development of Gdynia, we are prepared to treat these with consideration.

3) Our *quid pro quo* for Danzig, however, would not be limited to these concrete promises but beyond this, after the removal of this obstacle, it would lie in the really great possibilities of a common German-Polish policy. The strengthening of Germany would then react in full measure in favour of Poland's international position, as there would no longer be any rivalry or conflicting interests between the two countries. Above all Germany could then pursue a common Eastern policy with Poland in which the identical interests of both countries in warding off Bolshevism could also effectively be realized. We are also prepared, as we have already proved in the treatment of Carpatho-Ukraine, to concede to Poland the leading role in the future development of the whole Ukraine problem.

4) Our future attitude to Slovakia is also to be judged from the same standpoint. After the proclamation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia, the Führer could not simply ignore the appeal for protection addressed to him by Slovakia. Following the assurance of German protection we had now also concluded a concrete Treaty with Slovakia,<sup>3</sup> as it would have been impossible just to leave in suspense Germany's relationship with this remaining element of the former Czecho-Slovakia. Such a vacuum on the eastern frontier of the Reich would have been intolerable for us. It is obvious, however, that the treaty concluded with Slovakia allows of extremely wide scope in the extent to which it takes effect. The measure of this effectiveness will naturally be governed primarily by the future development of Germany's relationship to Poland. If this development is in accordance with our wishes, the possibility of a common treatment of the Slovak problem by Germany, Poland and Hungary would also be opened up.

5) In weighing up correctly all these points of view it would be completely erroneous to say that by the reincorporation of Danzig into the

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 40.

Reich, Poland was exchanging something really concrete for merely abstract or vague assurances. The Polish Government could certainly be in no doubt that, however the separate policies of both Governments developed, Danzig could in no case be permanently prevented from reunion with the Reich. Poland should therefore not commit the serious mistake of clinging obstinately to a position which in the long run must prove untenable. Now that we had already repeatedly offered the Polish Government a solution on the above-mentioned basis, without receiving any positive response, we naturally could not repeat this offer *ad infinitum*. Indeed, if the Polish Government still adopt a purely passive or evasive attitude, the Führer is resolved to withdraw his offer once and for all, as we could only interpret such an attitude on the part of Poland as a direct rejection of our intentions and as an attitude directed in principle against the Third Reich.

6) I therefore once again urgently request M. Beck through you to pay a visit to Berlin in the near future to discuss very thoroughly and frankly, first with me and then also with the Führer himself, all these political questions. The Führer, as well as I personally, would greatly welcome it if in this way we might succeed in bringing German-Polish relations out of the now clearly increasing stagnation into a fruitful course. This would be quite in keeping with the broad lines of the Führer's policy and he would only allow himself to be dissuaded from such a positive formulation of the relationship to Poland, if, to his own regret, he became convinced that Poland did not wish to heed his intentions but to follow other paths.

Please report at once in detail by telegram on the result of your conversation with M. Beck. I may then decide to summon you to Berlin to give an oral report.

RIBBENTROP

No. 74

2389/499880

*The Consul General at Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 454

DANZIG, March 23, 1939.

Received March 25.

Pol. V 2704.

Subject: Danzig Diet.

In the course of a recent conversation between Greiser, the President of the Senate, and Minister Chodacki, the Polish diplomatic representative, the question of the new elections for the Danzig Diet was also raised.

In this connection, and following consultation with Foreign Minister Beck, Minister Chodacki gave the view of the Polish Government, which was that the Polish Government were not interested in whether

an election for the Diet took place or whether and in what way the term of office of the present Diet was extended. On the basis of this statement, Greiser, the President of the Senate, informed Minister Chodacki that, by virtue of the Enabling Act, the Senate proposed to prolong the present term of the Diet by a Senate ordinance until further notice.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honour to transmit in the annex<sup>2</sup> a minute of the conversation which was placed at my disposal.

JANSON

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 24 Janson reported that the Senate had, on Mar. 21, issued an ordinance for the prolongation of the existing Diet's term of office for a further period of four years (not printed, 2389/499882).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2389/499881). The conversation took place on Mar. 17.

## No. 75

2770/536811-12

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A538

Moscow, March 23, 1939.

Pol. II 917.

Subject: Official Soviet communiqué on the Soviet proposal for a conference.

With reference to my report No. A506 of March 20<sup>1</sup> and telegram No. 37 of March 22.<sup>2</sup>

I enclose a translation of the communiqué by the Soviet Government published on March 22 concerning the Soviet proposal for a conference of representatives of Great Britain, France, Rumania, Poland, Turkey and the Soviet Union.<sup>3</sup>

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 50.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (258/169445). This telegram replied to the enquiry contained in document No. 58 by referring briefly to the Soviet communiqué transmitted in full in the document here printed on the subject of the British enquiry and the Soviet reply.

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, Nos. 461 and 462.

[Enclosure]

TASS COMMUNIQUE PUBLISHED IN THE MOSCOW PRESS ON  
MARCH 22, 1939

Pol. II 917.

The foreign press is circulating rumours to the effect that the Soviet Government recently offered Poland and Rumania their assistance in the event of their becoming the victims of aggression. Tass is authorized to state that this does not correspond to the facts. Neither Poland nor Rumania has approached the Soviet Government for assis-

tance or informed the Soviet Government of any danger threatening them. Correct is only that the British Government notified the Soviet Government on the 18th of this month that there were serious reasons for fearing an act of aggression against Rumania, and enquired as to the possible attitude of the Soviet Government to such an eventuality. In reply to this enquiry, the Soviet Government proposed that a conference be called of representatives from the States most interested, that is, Great Britain, France, Rumania, Poland, Turkey and the Soviet Union. Such a conference would, in the opinion of the Soviet Government, offer the greatest possibility of clarifying the actual situation and the attitude of all participants of the conference. The British Government, however, considered this proposal premature.

## No. 76

2913/484508

*Minute by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, March 23, 1939.

The Foreign Minister, in the course of a telephone conversation today, drew the attention of the Hungarian Minister to reports that the Hungarians had advanced from Košice to Presov and had already encircled Michalovce in eastern Slovakia. The Reich Foreign Minister further pointed out to the Hungarian Minister that such action could in no way be approved. The Hungarian Minister emphatically denied that any action had been undertaken from Košice and stated that, according to his information, Hungarian troops had merely occupied such territory which they claimed—as discussed with us<sup>1</sup>—as a frontier rectification against Slovakia.

The Hungarian Minister promised to obtain information in Budapest.

KORDT

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 17 (not printed, 350/202329), Woermann recorded that Gen. von Tippelskirch had told Weizsäcker that the boundary line west of Ungvár as drawn on the map by the Hungarians went further than was justified by military requirements. Woermann had telephoned to the Hungarian Minister, Sztójay, asking that military operations should not extend further west.

## No. 77

2729/532739

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 261

BERLIN, March 23, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister<sup>1</sup> today mentioned to me a request made to him by the Reich Foreign Minister about sparing the somewhat

<sup>1</sup> Döme Sztójay.

radically minded *Sitzleute* [*sic*]<sup>2</sup>. The Hungarian Government should not deny transit rights through the Carpatho-Ukraine to the people of this category who had connections with Admiral Canaris.

The Minister added that he had taken the necessary steps in this matter in Budapest.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> Evidently the Sić, the armed and uniformed Ukrainian nationalist organization in Ruthenia. See also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 210 and 215. In telegram No. 40 from Chust of Mar. 14 (not printed, 2381/499056-57), Hofmann, who was in charge of the German Consulate there, had reported clashes between the Czech gendarmerie and the Sić, and transmitted a further appeal to the Reich from Vološin for protection against the invading Hungarians. In a subsequent telegram, No. 48 of Mar. 16 (not printed, 1969/437937), Hofmann reported that the Hungarians had suffered considerable losses in fighting against the Sić. See also Editors' Note below.

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[EDITORS' NOTE. Evidence in the German Foreign Ministry archives indicates that the official German attitude towards the Sić and towards the Carpatho-Ukraine question generally had been extremely reserved. In response to enquiries from the Czecho-Slovak Government in February, 1939, as to German views on the Carpatho-Ukraine, reported by the Prague Legation under A III 2.h.5 of February 16 (not printed, 2381/499099-100), Altenburg had recommended in a minute of February 22 (not printed, 2381/499105) that the Carpatho-Ukraine question be not discussed with Prague, at least for the present. In a minute of March 7 (not printed, 2381/499115-16), on a conversation on that date with Oldofredi, leader of the *Volksdeutsche*, who referred to statements by State Secretary Keppler that Germany would not tolerate injustice towards the Carpatho-Ukraine by Prague, Altenburg recorded that he had made it clear that the Reich was not to be committed to active support. Following reports, in telegram No. 28 of March 7 from Chust (not printed, 2381/499110), of disagreements between the central Government in Prague and the Vološin Government in Chust, Weizsäcker had instructed the German Consulate there (in telegram No. 13 of March 8, not printed, 2381/499111) to avoid any political conversations with Vološin or other personages. On receipt of the message from the Carpatho-Ukraine Government declaring their independence under German protection, transmitted in Chust telegram No. 37 of March 14 (printed in volume IV of this Series, document No. 210), Altenburg minuted on March 14 (7587/E543255): "Herr Hewel, obtaining instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister, telephoned that no action is to be taken [on this telegram]." Hungarian forces began marching into the Carpatho-Ukraine on March 15 (see volume IV of this Series, documents Nos. 236 ff.) On March 22 Ribbentrop sent Csáky a telegram of congratulation on the reunion of the Carpatho-Ukraine with Hungary (not printed, 1969/437963).]

## No. 78

2104/455770-75; 784-88

*German-Rumanian Economic Treaty*

## TREATY

FOR THE PROMOTION OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN  
THE GERMAN REICH AND THE KINGDOM OF RUMANIA<sup>1</sup>

The German Reich and the Kingdom of Rumania, desirous of intensifying the constantly expanding economic relations between the two countries and of cooperating in their mutual interests on a broad and planned basis in the economic field, have in pursuance of their peaceful aims agreed to conclude a treaty to this effect.

For this purpose there have been nominated as their plenipotentiaries,

by the Chancellor of the German Reich:

the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Bucharest, Dr. Wilhelm Fabricius,

and the Ministerialdirektor to the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan, Herr Helmuth Wohlthat,

by His Majesty the King of Rumania:

The Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Grigore Gafencu,

and the Minister of Economics, M. Ioan E. Bujoiu,

who having examined their powers and found them in good and proper form have agreed on the following:

## Article I

An economic plan providing for cooperation for several years between the contracting parties will be drawn up to supplement the existing German-Rumanian economic relations under which the balance of mutual trade shall be maintained in principle.

The economic plan shall take into account on the one hand German import requirements and on the other hand development possibilities for Rumanian production and Rumanian domestic requirements as well as the necessity for Rumania to maintain economic relations with other countries.

The economic plan shall include in particular:

1a. The development and direction of Rumanian agricultural production. After a previous exchange of information by the departments concerned on both sides a start will be made both on the cultivation of new agricultural products and an increase in those

<sup>1</sup> The text of this Treaty, but not the confidential Protocol of Signature, was published in *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 779-781. For Wohlthat's account of the negotiations which led to the conclusion of the Treaty, see vol. v of this Series, document No. 306, and this volume, document No. 131.

already cultivated, in particular, feeding stuffs, oil seeds and fibrous plants.

- b. The development of existing and the starting of fresh agricultural industries and processing concerns.
- 2a. The development of the Rumanian timber trade and forestry.
- b. The establishment of timber trade concerns and industries in so far as this appears necessary in view of 2a.
- 3a. The delivery of machinery and installations for mining in Rumania.
- b. The formation of mixed German-Rumanian companies for prospecting and exploiting copper pyrites in the Dobruja, chromium in the Banat, manganese ores in the neighbourhood of Vatra Dornei-Brosteni. Likewise, the possibility will be studied of utilizing bauxite deposits and, if need be, of developing an aluminium industry.
4. The formation of a mixed German-Rumanian company, the object of which shall be to prospect for petroleum and carry out a programme of boring and refining.
5. Cooperation in the industrial field.
6. The establishment of free zones in which industrial and commercial undertakings may be formed, and the provision of storage and transshipment facilities for German shipping in these free zones.
7. The delivery of war material and equipment for the Rumanian Army, Navy and Air Force and the armaments industry.
8. The development of the communications and transport systems, the network of roads and waterways.
9. The setting-up of publicly owned undertakings.
10. Collaboration between German and Rumanian banks in the interest of both countries and especially with a view to financing individual projects.

## Article II

The Government Committees, set up under Article 32 of the Treaty of March 23, 1935<sup>2</sup> between the German Reich and the Kingdom of Rumania, relating to Establishment, Commerce and Navigation, will be entrusted with the execution of this Treaty.

## Article III

The Government Committees will as occasion arises inform one another of their intentions which come within the meaning of this Treaty. They will decide regarding the execution of individual projects. The two Governments will afford the necessary assistance to economic organizations and firms engaged in the preparatory work on and the carrying out of the projects specified in Article I and will, by granting

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this treaty see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1935, Part II, pp. 311-338.



such licences as are required by law, facilitate the execution of the projects approved by the Government Committees.

#### Article IV

The payments to be made by Germany to Rumania and *vice versa* consequent on the implementation of this Treaty will be effected in accordance with the regulations generally in force for German-Rumanian payments. The Government Committees may agree that a percentage of the proceeds of those deliveries of goods provided for in Article I, Nos. 7-9, or other such deliveries be used for capital investment and financing the projects specified in Article I.

#### Article V

This Treaty shall be ratified. It will come into force one month after the instruments of ratification have been exchanged, which shall be done in Berlin as soon as possible. The contracting parties will apply the treaty provisionally as from the day of signature.

This Treaty shall remain in force until March 31, 1944. Should it not be denounced a year before this date, it shall be regarded as having been extended for an unspecified period. It may then be denounced at any time subject to one year's notice at the end of any calendar quarter.

Done in duplicate at Bucharest in the German and Rumanian languages, both texts having equal authenticity, on March 23, 1939.

WILHELM FABRICIUS

GRIGORE GAFENCU

HELMUTH WOHLTHAT

I. E. BUJOIU

CONFIDENTIAL

#### PROTOCOL OF SIGNATURE

TO THE TREATY FOR THE PROMOTION OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS  
BETWEEN THE GERMAN REICH AND THE KINGDOM OF RUMANIA

On signature of the Treaty for the Promotion of Economic Relations between the German Reich and the Kingdom of Rumania of March 23rd, 1939, the concurrence of the Contracting Parties on the interpretation and implementation of the agreements reached has been placed on record in respect of the following points:

*With reference to Article I, Section 1.*

Desirous of developing Rumania's agriculture, the German Government are agreeable to the necessary experts being placed at the disposal of the Rumanian authorities. They will, furthermore, promote the supply of the necessary machinery and plant by German firms.

The Royal Rumanian Government will set up suitable organizations

for promoting the production and processing of agricultural produce and, as far as may appear necessary, will facilitate the establishment of mixed German-Rumanian companies to deal with the conclusion of cultivation contracts, to engage in trading in, and the processing of, agricultural produce and to arrange for the financing thereof.

*With reference to Article I, Section 2.*

The German-Rumanian timber and forestry committee will, over a period of years, make a survey of the quantities of coniferous and beech sawn timber, coniferous logs and coniferous wood pulp available in Rumania for export to Germany and will agree upon the grading of each type. They will submit to the Government Committees proposals for the exploitation of forests and for reafforestation. The Government Committees will, as and when necessary, decide upon the despatch of timber and forestry experts.

*With reference to Article I, Section 4.*

As soon as data are available, the projected German-Rumanian company will draw up a minimum programme of boring and, where advisable, of refining, to be approved by the Royal Rumanian Government. The Royal Rumanian Government will take the necessary steps to facilitate the execution of a large scale petroleum programme.

*With reference to Article I, Section 5.*

In order to facilitate cooperation between German and Rumanian industry, a mixed industrial sub-committee of the Government Committees will be formed which will submit the requisite proposals to the Government Committees.

*With reference to Article I, Section 6.*

The Royal Rumanian Government agree to the formation in the Free Zone, of mixed German-Rumanian companies which will engage in manufacture and export. The Government Committees will take decisions from case to case on the setting up and the details of the technical organizations, the equipping, financing and so on.

*With reference to Article I, Sections 7-9.*

The total commercial credit will be in the order of about 200-250 million R.M.

*With reference to Article I, Section 8.*

German supplies are contemplated *inter alia* for the Rumanian telecommunications network, the Rumanian railways, merchant shipping and civil aviation in as far as Rumanian requirements cannot be met by Rumanian industry.

*With reference to Article I, Section 9.*

Orders for public monopolies also come under this provision. The construction of electrical, gas and water works, of hospitals, fire stations, abattoirs and cold storage is contemplated *inter alia*.

*With reference to Article I, Section 10.*

The Royal Rumanian Government will permit German banks to have an interest in Rumanian banking institutions.

In order to promote the development of Rumanian production as envisaged by the agreements reached, the German Government will encourage German banks to afford German suppliers adequate support to enable them to grant commercial credits for investments, economically sound or approved by the Government Committees.

*With reference to Article II.*

The terms of reference of the Government Committees shall be to achieve the uniform, orderly and central implementation of the Treaty.

The Government Committees are to ensure that the programme of deliveries and purchases contemplated under this Treaty does not disturb the balance of payments and that any considerable fluctuations which may occur may be rectified by measures in the field of commodity exchange or, should this provide no relief, by suitable financial measures.

The Rumanian Government Committee will submit proposals for the representation of German firms in Rumania to the German Government Committee from case to case.

*With reference to Article III.*

With regard to the grant of residence permits, express reference is made to Article I, paragraph 3, of the Treaty of Establishment, Commerce and Navigation of March 23, 1935, between the German Reich and the Kingdom of Rumania.<sup>2</sup>

*With reference to Article IV.*

The present rule that goods paid for under the German-Rumanian Clearing Agreement are for consumption within the Customs Territory of either country and not for export to third countries also holds good for transactions effected under the present Treaty.

In the execution of the projects to be approved under the present Treaty, care must be taken to ensure that financial measures (investments, credits) are kept within limits which do not disturb the course of commodity exchange.

*With reference to Article V.*

Both Governments will treat the Protocol of Signature as confidential and will, without prior consultation, neither publish details therefrom

<sup>2</sup>For the text of this Treaty see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1935 Part II, pp. 311-338.

nor bring them to the knowledge of third Governments or persons or firms whom they do not concern.

Done in duplicate at Bucharest in the German and Rumanian languages, both texts having equal authenticity, on March 23, 1939.

WILHELM FABRICIUS  
HELMUTH WOHLTHAT

GRIGORE GAFENCU  
I. E. BUJOIU

## No. 79

1625/388391-92

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 44 of March 23

WARSAW, March 24, 1939—3:30 a.m.

Received March 24—8:10 a.m.

Pol. II 905.

With reference to your telegram No. 65 of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

Upon investigation here it has been established that in regard to the British *démarches* two separate moves were involved.

Concerning the Polish attitude towards the *démarche* about the threat to Rumania, a remark passed by Under State Secretary Arciszewski to some diplomats here is of interest. Coupled with disparaging remarks about Britain and France, who always want to misuse Poland for extraneous ends without incurring any risk to themselves, he declared that Poland would at all times take up arms in her own interests and would wage even a hopeless struggle, but never would she fight merely in the interests of other Powers. One would probably not go far wrong in assuming that the reply to the British *démarche* on the Rumanian question was given somewhat along these lines.

It has not been possible so far to learn anything definite regarding the other British suggestions, in connection with which the British Ambassador<sup>2</sup> has paid repeated visits to the Polish Foreign Ministry. From the general trend of Beck's policy it is, however, safe to assume that Poland—emulating her attitude in the question of the Comintern Pact—would be prepared only with reluctance to join any combination, or allow herself to become involved in moves which would force her to declare her position prematurely and openly. That of course does not imply that Poland would not act if, in the course of these negotiations, the opportunity were to occur of obtaining definite British assurances which would increase her security in the event of a German attack. Beck, however, would decide to associate himself with an overt move, only if he were forced to do so by the increasingly noticeable wave of

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 58, which was sent to Warsaw as telegram No. 65.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Howard Kennard.

nationalism which threatens his position. Meanwhile, the arrest of the prominent editor, Mackiewicz,<sup>3</sup> who although an adherent of Pilsudski, is a bitter opponent of Beck, might be an indication that the Foreign Minister's position is still strong.

Agitation among the Polish population has increased considerably since the return of Memel to the Reich.<sup>4</sup> The main reason for this is that it is generally feared that now it will be the turn of Danzig and the Corridor. The Government appear to assess the Memel question with considerably greater calm. Under State Secretary Arciszewski, it is true, spoke to me of a "very unpleasant surprise", but remarked in passing that it was essentially a concern of the signatory Powers. Still, the call-up of reservists, which has been observed in isolated cases for some days, but which has been intensified since yesterday, shows that the Government consider it advisable to make it known abroad, but particularly at home, that Poland will not submit to any interference with her vital interests.<sup>5</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>3</sup> Editor of *Stowo*.<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 80.<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Settled by Pol. II 906 [see document No. 83]. R[intelen]. 25/3."

## No. 80

2767/535330

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram (by courier)

No. 122 of March 24

BUCHAREST, March 24, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received March 27—2:35 p.m.

Pol. II 944.

With reference to your telegram No. 95 of March 21 (Pol. II 798).<sup>2</sup>

I. Foreign Minister Gafencu had already informed me of Minister Tilea's attitude as described by telegram from London. It seemed to me unbelievable, as up to now Tilea has always been loyal to us here, and, although President of the Anglo-Rumanian Cultural Association, he was considered to be pro-German from conviction.

The Foreign Minister explains his attitude as due to excessive zeal in following his own economic policy. But this should not have deviated from the economic policy of the Government. For this reason

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5453/E366628). This telegram repeated to Bucharest the text of document No. 42 and of telegram No. 60 of Mar. 19 from Budapest (not printed, 2767/53526-27), in which Erdmannsdorff reported that he had been told in strict confidence by Csáky that the Hungarian Minister in London had been asked by Sir Orme Sargent (Assistant Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office) what would be the Hungarian attitude in the event of a German attack on Rumania.

Tilea had been recalled. It would be decided here whether he would return to London at all.

II. The Foreign Minister re-affirmed to me that he had requested the British not to come here for the discussion of concrete business until the German-Rumanian negotiations were concluded. He complained of the enormous pressure which up to the last moment had been exerted on the Government from abroad, in order to prevent the conclusion of the Wohlthat Treaty.<sup>3</sup> For example, the British Minister<sup>4</sup> had called on him concerning an alleged German economic ultimatum which he had denied. The Minister again called because his denial was not believed in London. Gafencu without further ado then took the Minister to the King, who repeated this to him and explained to him what was being negotiated with Germany.

III. Gafencu also complained of the incredible rumours which had been circulated in order to overthrow him.

IV. There is nothing to report regarding the alleged suggestion by King Carol for an exchange of views on the guarantee of Rumania's frontiers by the Western Powers.

FABRICIUS

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Treaty printed as document No. 78.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Reginald Hoare. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 443.

## No. 81

2770/536813

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 39 of March 24

Moscow, March 24, 1939—8:24 p.m.

Received March 24—9:5 p.m.

Pol. II 922.

With reference to your telegram No. 44 (Pol. II 825) of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

Hudson arrived yesterday. In the afternoon he visited Litvinov and Potemkin and also had a discussion with Mikoyan. I had an opportunity of speaking to Hudson and Ashton-Gwatkin afterwards at a reception by the British Commercial Attaché<sup>2</sup> here, and learned that Hudson only intends to conduct preliminary trade discussions here. If the results are favourable the negotiations proper would take place

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2770/536808). This telegram contained an enquiry, based on a report from Helsinki, and addressed to the Embassies at Moscow and London, as to whether it was true that Hudson was empowered to invite Litvinov to London. In telegram No. 86 of Mar. 23 from London (not printed, 2770/536809), Kordt replied that nothing was known of this. It was, however, thought that Litvinov had himself offered to come to London in connection with the Russian proposal for a conference.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Todd, Commercial Secretary at the British Embassy.

MARCH, 1939

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in London with a Soviet delegation, preferably led by Mikoyan. Meanwhile, nothing can be ascertained regarding the alleged invitation for Litvinov to go to London. I leave it to you to inform Helsinki in accordance with telegram quoted.

TIPPELSKIRCH

## No. 82

1975/438343

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 79 of March 24

BUDAPEST, March 24, 1939—11:10 p.m.

Received March 25—4:10 a.m.

Pol. IV 2109.

The Foreign Minister informed me that he would receive the Rumanian Minister<sup>1</sup> tomorrow and make the following statement to him: In the event of the Minister being able to declare officially that Rumania would commence demobilization within 24 hours, the Hungarian Government would immediately rescind the measures adopted for the defence of Budapest and would reduce the 6th Army Corps in Debreczen to peace strength.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>1</sup> Raoul Bossy.

## No. 83

1025/393393-96

*Circular of the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 24, 1939.

zu Pol. II 906.<sup>2</sup>

Reports so far to hand here on progress and results of diplomatic action by the British Government towards the formation of a united front against Germany<sup>3</sup> give the following picture:

On March 18 the British Government approached a large number of foreign Governments to find out their attitude towards the German action, as well as to the—according to Britain—supposedly imminent

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were all Missions in Europe (excepting those at San Sebastian, Tallinn, Riga, Kovno and Luxembourg), the Embassy at Washington and the Consulates General at Ottawa and Sydney.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7492/E540482). In this telegram, No. 16 of Mar. 23 from Oslo, Sahm reported that no British or French approach had been made to Norway.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 58.

German attack on Rumania. This enquiry was made by Britain, partly as a mere *ballon d'essai*, partly in more precise form, apart from Paris, in Warsaw, Moscow, the Balkans, Hungary, and also Portugal. In Europe, the Baltic and Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland were not asked. Furthermore, Britain had circulated this enquiry to the Dominions. The result of this move was obviously only moderately satisfactory, as the majority of the Governments asked apparently replied in the negative or evasively, and even the Dominions did not show any inclination to be drawn into a European conflict so long as Britain herself was not attacked. Moscow replied with the counter proposal to call a conference.<sup>4</sup>

In view of this result, London turned to closer consideration of the idea of a joint declaration by Britain, France, Russia and Poland,<sup>5</sup> whereby these Powers were to enter into consultation regarding joint resistance in the event of a renewed threat by Germany. This proposal, however, encountered strong suspicion in Warsaw, whilst Moscow, according to an unconfirmed Reuter report, is said to have assented. Poland obviously fears to appear openly in an anti-German combination by associating herself with the declaration, the consequences of which she would be the first to have to take in any given case, without having thereby obtained reliable guarantees for her security. Moreover, Poland would look on Russia as a dubious partner.<sup>6</sup>

These difficulties appear then to have led London to consider falling back on the Russian proposal for a conference. Furthermore, according to information as yet not fully confirmed, a dual declaration is now contemplated in London: first, a guarantee to Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland by France and Britain, and secondly, a declaration for the protection of the eastern European countries against German attack. This much, however, may be taken for certain, that in comparison with the initial announcement in the London and Paris press, the final result of the British action will prove to be very meagre. Moreover, this action mainly denotes a wooing of Moscow by Britain, through which she makes herself less attractive to other countries and repeats the French mistake of 1935.<sup>7</sup> This aspect of the matter is especially to be emphasized in conversations.

Should essential additions or corrections to this picture be established by you, please report by telegram.<sup>8</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 75.

<sup>5</sup> See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 446.

<sup>6</sup> In telegrams No. 85 of Mar. 22 (not printed, 1625/388387) and No. 90 of Mar. 23 (not printed, 1625/388389-90), Kordt had sent similar information from London.

<sup>7</sup> i.e., the Franco-Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance, which was signed on May 2, 1935.

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note: "Supplement for Berne, Brussels, The Hague: Further instructions reserved. Weizsäcker."



## No. 84

1625/388402

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 186 of March 24

PARIS, March 24, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received March 25—12:30 a.m.

Pol. II 920.

A considerable section of the Paris press publishes reports which in the main agree that on the occasion of the French President's visit to London, Chamberlain, Halifax and Bonnet had signed a protocol or exchanged *aide-mémoires* in which France and Britain undertook, in the event of an attack on Holland or Switzerland, automatically to render armed assistance to these countries and to defend their frontiers.<sup>2</sup> The agreement thus concluded confirmed the oral arrangement said to have been reached on January 29 in Paris between Bonnet and the British Ambassador here.<sup>3</sup> The obligations thus assumed are the same or similar to those existing *vis-à-vis* Belgium. As regards the January agreements, *l'Europe Nouvelle* reports in its issue of March 18 (p. 301) that Britain had desired commitments over Holland, and France over Switzerland.

BRÄUER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> The French President and Mme. Lebrun, accompanied by the Foreign Minister, M. Bonnet, paid a state visit to Britain on Mar. 21-24, during which time a series of informal talks took place. For an account of these conversations, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. IV, Nos. 458, 484 and 507.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Eric Phipps. See also *ibid.*, Nos. 40, 50, 51 and 52.

## No. 85

2386/499810-11

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 24, 1939.

Pol. V 2677.

Consul General von Janson, Danzig, has just telephoned the following information:

According to reliable reports reaching the Consulate-General at Danzig, measures of a purely defensive nature have for some days past been taken by Poland in the northern part of the Corridor. The details of the measures involved are as follows:

1) Empty rolling stock was being withdrawn from Gdynia as during the crisis of September 1938.

2) The bridge over the Vistula at Dirschau had not, contrary to custom, been illuminated during the previous night. Machine guns protected by sandbags had been mounted on the bridge.

3) In Toruń reservists of the 1912-16 age groups had been called up and transferred to Bromberg.

4) In widely different districts of the Corridor, horses and taxicabs had been requisitioned by the military authorities.

5) General cancellation of leave had been ordered in the garrisons.

6) 300 goods waggons, 120 passenger coaches and 16 locomotives had been despatched to Poland from the Free City of Danzig (where the railway belongs to the Poles) on March 23, 1939.

Submitted to the State Secretary for information through Senior Counsellor Schliep, the Deputy Director of the Political Department and the Under State Secretary.

Pol[itical Department] I Mil[itary Questions] has received a copy direct.

BERGMANN

### No. 86

100/64427; 422-26; 429

#### *Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy*

ROME, March 24, 1939.

I gave Attaché Freiherr von Schroeder, who came here as special courier, two copies of the enclosed memorandum<sup>1</sup> today to take with him to Berlin and submit direct to the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary respectively.

I added the remark that, from information reaching me from the same source, during the day on the evening of which the Fascist Grand Council was held, the Duce still intended to add to his unequivocal statement concerning the Axis the words between blue brackets in the enclosure marked in green.<sup>2</sup> I had the impression that if, as can be seen from the memorandum on the course of the meeting, he abandoned this intention, that might well be due to the fact that in the meantime he had seen the Reich Foreign Minister's letter to Count Ciano.<sup>3</sup>

V. MACKENSEN

<sup>1</sup> Enclosure 1.

<sup>2</sup> Enclosure 2, passage between asterisks.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 55.

[Enclosure 1]<sup>4</sup>

ROME, March 22, 1939.

At the Fascist Grand Council on March 21, the Foreign Minister, Ciano, first gave a brief description of the international situation based on the diplomatic reports received, without presenting any unusual details.

<sup>4</sup> The State Secretary's copy of this memorandum (1848/421063-67) bears the following marginal note: "State Secretary: Brought from Rome today by the Courier Attaché von Schroeder. Si[egfried] 24/3."

Mussolini, on the other hand, spoke for well over an hour, and gave a historical sketch of the irresistible process of revision, which, with compelling logic, had led to the unequivocal continuance of the policy of the Rome-Berlin Axis. He took as his starting point the tremendous mistakes made by France and Britain under Clemenceau's influence during and after Versailles. Clemenceau had always been the greatest and most violent hater not only of Germany but of Italy too, and had never forgiven Napoleon III for favouring the unification of Italy, and still less for not having prevented and made impossible the unification of the German Empire while there was still time. Imbued with this fanatical attitude, Clemenceau at Versailles forcibly carved up Germany and robbed her beyond all reason, and at the same time he also refused Italy the colonial compensation which had been promised, and in addition tried to build up, by every available means and by offers of assistance, a barrier of anti-German States to the east of Germany. The whole post-war period was dominated by the ruinous consequences of these blunders and injustices at Versailles, which as time went on had only been made worse still at Geneva. Italy, resurrected under the Lictors' Fasces, renewed by Fascism, and led on to a new position of power, had from the beginning tried to give a new direction to European policy, and as far as possible to set it free from Clemenceau's mistakes. She had therefore opposed the territorial occupation of the Ruhr, requested cancellation of war debts, and made efforts to bring Germany back, with equal rights, into the concert of the great European Powers. The policy of Fascist Italy had aimed at producing at least some understanding and cooperation among the Great Powers, and that had also been the intention behind his proposal to conclude a Four-Power Pact,<sup>5</sup> which was to have initiated a peaceful revision of Versailles. This attempt had failed, chiefly because of France's intransigence and lack of understanding of politics and history. Nevertheless, in the end the Peace Treaties were revised from necessity. Had the revision, of course, been carried out at the right time, and in the way suggested by Mussolini, it would have gradually brought about an easing of the international tension and have put Europe in a position to resume the role of leadership in the world which is her due. Instead, revision took place in a series of severe eruptions which progressively exacerbated the international situation.

The Versailles injustices, however, had become especially harsh when Italy was preparing her expedition to Ethiopia. Britain and France at that time allowed themselves to be guided by their old feelings of jealousy and hegemony, and considered that the moment had come for dealing the decisive blow against Italy who had become troublesome. During that phase, agreement between the interests of Germany

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<sup>5</sup> In March, 1933.

and Italy in opposition to the intolerable imperialism of the two Western Powers began clearly to show itself. Germany refused to take part in sanctions against Italy, and immediately seized the opportunity to reassert her right to defend herself, and fortified the Rhineland. It was consonant with the logical sequence of events that in the future also Italy and Germany should march side by side to an increasing degree, and that neither of the two Powers should oppose the just demands of the other partner. Therefore, Italy had not opposed the *Anschluss* of Austria with Germany. As regards Czecho-Slovakia, a country made up of several national groups and artificially invented at Versailles as a tool for war against Germany, the wish of the Sudeten Germans to follow the Austrians into the Reich could not be rejected or combated. After the Peace of Munich, Czecho-Slovakia could have achieved new life, under two conditions: complete loyalty to the Reich, and thus also the full guarantee of the rights of her minorities. But Prague was not equal to the situation or the task, and did not free herself from the influence of Jews, Freemasons, Democrats and Bolsheviks. Instead of this she relied on the false hope of getting her own back on Germany once the great democracies had carried out their mighty rearmament programme. Looking at the situation from that point of view, Germany could not have acted differently from the way she did, for reasons of geography, history and politics. Italy would have done just the same under similar circumstances, and thus Italy remained "*perfettamente solidale*" [in complete solidarity] with the Reich, especially now, when the Western Powers were threatening her with a new policy of encirclement.

As regards Italy's natural aspirations, it was true that she had no Mgr. Tiso to make her a present of her demands. "*Ma anche la nostra ora verrà*" [But our time will come too]. The events of the last few days had created some disturbances here and there in Italian public opinion, which by and large was not in a position to assess the reasons of the Reich. But enlightenment would follow.

Mussolini concluded by referring to the tremendous increase of power achieved in the last few weeks by Germany, and thus also by the Rome-Berlin Axis, through the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia, particularly in view of the munition factories and industrial plant, and declared with great emphasis that Italian policy "*andrà fino in fondo, basandosi sull'asse e sulle amicizie che vanno consolidandosi intorno all'asse*" [would go to the limit, basing itself on the Axis and on the friendships being consolidated around the Axis].

Of the members of the Grand Council who spoke, only Grandi's and Balbo's<sup>6</sup> statements are of interest. Grandi said that the Duce's policy

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<sup>6</sup> Count Grandi, Italian Ambassador in Great Britain, and Marshal Balbo, Governor General of Libya.

was the policy dictated to Italy by history, and that absolute loyalty to this policy gave to Italy great moral strength as regards Britain. Balbo dealt briefly with the military situation in Libya and Tunis. The forces gathered in Libya were sufficient for present needs and for defence. The French had only weak advance posts near the frontier. The real defence positions lay 100 kilometres behind the frontier, beyond the desert area. At present there were no signs of immediate danger. In any case Libya was prepared, and in case of emergency could at once take further necessary measures.

Summing up, it can be stated that no differences of opinion emerged in the Fascist Grand Council, and that the statements and views of the Duce were unanimously accepted. Upon special enquiry, it was emphasized that the discontent expressed in the Palazzo Chigi about Berlin's delay in keeping Rome informed was not mentioned at all. Neither was anything said about Spain in yesterday's meeting of the Grand Council.

This discontent concerns the practice—observed again and again—of presenting Italy with a *fait accompli*, though it is sometimes admitted that events follow each other extremely fast. But then people are wondering, with some anxiety, where and how far Germany really intends to go. As Austria, the Sudetenland, Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia are in German hands, and as Germany also has a dominating influence in Hungary, while Hungary now holds Ruthenia and is perhaps counting sooner or later on Croatia, to which of course Dalmatia also belongs, people are saying that in the end the old Hapsburg Empire, this time under the swastika flag, will reappear on the Adriatic, “una cosa che l'Italia difficilmente potrebbe tollerare” [something which Italy would find difficult to tolerate]. Moreover, Mussolini could not expose himself to the reproach from his own country that he was rebuilding the old Hapsburg Empire, or at least restoring the *status quo* of power which existed before the war and before the destruction of the Hapsburg Monarchy. Mussolini and Ciano do not share these apprehensions, basing themselves, as they stressed, on secret agreements made in October, 1936<sup>7</sup>, in Berlin, by which the Adriatic zone is expressly reserved to the Italian sphere of influence, while Italy at that time allowed Germany to expand in the east and south east.

<sup>7</sup> The confidential Protocol signed in Berlin by Neurath and Ciano on Oct. 23, 1936 (not printed, 2871/563579-88) does not refer to the Adriatic zone or to the Mediterranean. On Sept. 23, 1936, Dr. Hans Frank, then Minister without portfolio, had a conversation with Mussolini, his notes of which (not printed, 1231/335829-35) record that Mussolini, with reference to the British, said: “The Mediterranean is ours.” The Italian version of this conversation given in Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 74-76 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 43-45), under the date Sept. 23, 1936, records Frank as saying that Hitler regarded the Mediterranean as an Italian sphere; there is an Italian record of a conversation between Hitler and Ciano on Oct. 24, 1936, (*loc. cit.*, pp. 93-99; English edition, pp. 56-60) in which Hitler repeated this declaration. No German record of this latter conversation has been found. The official communiqué issued after the meeting contains no mention of the Mediterranean.

[Enclosure 2]

100/64429

MARCH 21, 1939.

Bergmann<sup>s</sup> has just told me, at 9.40 p.m., that Ciano and Mussolini will speak in detail on the international situation in today's meeting of the Fascist Grand Council. The gist of their statements will be that "anche dopo gli ultimi avvenimenti rimarrà al fianco della Germania \*sebbene si avrebbe preferito di essere stato preavvertito\*" [even after recent events, Italy will remain at Germany's side \*although she would have preferred to be informed in advance\*]. This addition, however, will not be included in the official communiqué of the meeting, though this reservation is generally very strongly emphasized in the Palazzo Chigi. It is stressed that even without an alliance, Italy remains loyal to Germany, even should war threaten (which is not expected in the present case), and for that very reason can expect to be prepared and informed in good time.

B[ergmann] declares that his information is absolutely certain, but emphasizes that, in a possible communication by telephone to Berlin, it could only be very guardedly reported that Italy, as was always assumed, still "rimane in linea" [keeps in line]. B[ergmann] emphasizes that for special reasons it is extremely important for him that we should only speak very cautiously of "good news" which would come during the night concerning Italy's attitude to Germany.

<sup>s</sup> The reference is uncertain.

## No. 87

F19/473-71

*Ambassador Mackensen to Counsellor Erich Kordt*

ROME, March 24, 1939.

DEAR HERR KORDT: As you will know, the Reich Foreign Minister telephoned to me again yesterday at midday on the matter of the memorandum of the Führer-Attolico conversation,<sup>1</sup> of which you are aware, and instructed me to give Attolico, should he so desire, more detailed information from this memorandum. I have written the enclosed memorandum of my conversation today with Attolico, which I request you to submit to the Reich Foreign Minister. I hope to hear more from Attolico after his report to the Duce. Incidentally, he appeared to be much impressed by the mood he found prevailing here in Rome. The Duce seems to have been much annoyed by the fact that in the final phases of the Czecho-Slovak dissolution we just con-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 52.

fronted him with a *fait accompli*. Attolico explained this by the circumstance that, in contrast with the course of events which came to a conclusion in Vienna, the Duce had this time had no opportunity whatever to prepare public opinion. He felt this all the more as, in his view, our present procedure ran counter to the policy hitherto adhered to by us in principle, not to incorporate non-Germans, a policy which he had defended in a personal letter to Runciman<sup>2</sup> and in his speech at Verona.<sup>3</sup> Attolico added that the Duce was, however, not the man to brood for long over the past, and so, this time—and this must be regarded as an immense service on his part—he had, without a moment's hesitation, accepted the course of events, and had most energetically supported the decision of which we are aware, in the Fascist Grand Council—as indeed Ciano did also, a point on which Attolico laid particular stress. Here Attolico hinted that at the Fascist Grand Council, where complete frankness of expression was allowed, keen criticism had been voiced.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours,

MACKENSEN

<sup>2</sup> Vol. II of this Series, document No. 488.

<sup>3</sup> On Sept. 26, 1938. See *ibid.*, document No. 611.

[Enclosure]

100/65615-17

#### MEMORANDUM

ROME, March 24, 1939.

In accordance with yesterday's telephoned instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister,<sup>4</sup> I took immediate steps to get into touch with Attolico, but it was only towards 11 o'clock at night that I received a telephone call from him. He thanked me for suggesting seeing him again about the substance of his conversation with the Führer in the light of the fresh material which had reached me in the interval. He regretted that he had not been able to reply to my telephone message sooner, but the sudden serious illness of his brother-in-law had claimed all his attention. He would, however, call on me in the course of the morning.

He arrived shortly after 12 o'clock today and I told him that I had meanwhile received further instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister and, in a "cipher telegram", a memorandum<sup>5</sup> on our version

<sup>4</sup> A memorandum by Mackensen dated Mar. 23 (not printed, 100/65621-22) notes these instructions which Ribbentrop telephoned himself.

<sup>5</sup> As is evident from document No. 52 and footnote 1 thereto, and as emerges from a telegram from Mackensen, No. 106 of Mar. 22 (not printed, 100/65625-26), the memorandum was sent by special courier and not in a "cipher telegram".

of the conversation. I placed myself at his disposal to compare this memorandum with his own and to answer any questions he might put. Attolico thanked me and asked that, in making this comparison, we should proceed as follows. I would mention each individual point of the conversation in turn, he would then say first what he remembered about it, and I would then complete this. This method of comparison showed that his version tallied almost completely, in parts nearly word for word, with the text of the so-called second amended memorandum before me. A deviation, in itself perhaps not negligible, was detected only at one point. In the passage on page 3<sup>6</sup> of the memorandum in question, that concerning the significance of the British Navy in relation to the maintenance of German sea-routes and German trade, Attolico was somewhat fuller than the memorandum, in that he expatiated on the objectives of possible German measures for securing supplies through more extensive military operations.

Referring to page 5 of the memorandum, I asked him on what he based the view that the Duce "must now get something";<sup>7</sup> Attolico replied that this opinion was based on the view, widely shared here, that the time had come for Italy also, with her well-known claims against France, to get some advantage out of the Axis. At this point it transpired that the impression I gathered yesterday, that Attolico had already made a report to the Duce personally yesterday morning, was incorrect. On the contrary, he is not seeing him until this afternoon. I told Attolico that I did not share his view on this point, but that on the contrary I had observed a whole series of things which led to the conclusion that Mussolini had no intention of letting himself be carried away by the current of public opinion, or of forcing the pace. I then pointed out to him also that, from all I had heard here about Mussolini's intentions, the actual programme (not a programme which he expected to materialize overnight, but one for the realization of which he had—if I were correctly informed—even reserved the right of fixing the date himself) was confined to Suez, Jibuti and Tunis. Corsica, as far as I knew, together with Nice and Savoy, came under what Mussolini described as Italy's so-called "historic" claims, the attainment of which was only to be expected within the framework of major general events. Attolico replied—according to the memorandum—that when he mentioned Corsica it was not a demand for cession that was meant, but for neutralization. I replied that, to my mind, that did not greatly alter the matter.

Attolico promised to call here again before his return journey, which would probably take place the day after tomorrow.

V. MACKENSEN

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 52, passage quoted in footnote 11.

<sup>7</sup> See *ibid.*, sentence following footnote 20.



## No. 88

2908/568063-64

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Moltke*

STRICTLY PERSONAL

BERLIN, March 24, 1939.

DEAR MOLTKE: I owe you a word in addition to the telephone conversation we have just had, in which you were asked to cancel your conversation arranged with M. Beck to supplement the Lipski-v. Ribbentrop conversation of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister instructed me to do this after he had submitted the draft of the instructions to you to the Führer.<sup>2</sup> I realize that the procedure now adopted is somewhat embarrassing for you and might even give rise to certain political conjectures. However, that cannot be helped.

In actual fact the substance of the instructions to be addressed to you did not differ greatly from the conversation of March 21, only it was more sharply worded and, as it were, presented the Poles with the option: friend or foe. They would have had to pay for our friendship in the way of which you are aware, but at the same time would also have received the gift of which you know, frontier recognition lasting for twenty-five years.

As it is late I refrain from further explanations, but I assume that M. Beck will try to evade as far as he can the option mentioned. On the results of such an evasion I can only draw conclusions of which Herr von Scheliha<sup>3</sup> will inform you orally.

Best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 61.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 73.

<sup>3</sup> Counsellor at the Warsaw Embassy. No indication of his report has been found.

## No. 89

6402/E474900-01

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Minister*

Telegram

No. 103 of March 25

WASHINGTON, March 25, 1939—5:48 a.m.

Received March 26—3:35 a.m.

W VIIIa 686.

With reference to my telegram No. 96 of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

1) Accompanied by delegates of the German-American Chamber of Commerce, Customs Attorney Pickerel, who fully agrees with the views

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 56.

of the Embassy as set forth in paragraph 3 of telegram No. 96, today negotiated with the Customs Bureau (Johnson) to secure the release from the provisional additional 25 per cent customs duty of imports undertaken against dollars or free Reichsmarks. Johnson asked for proposals in writing, which he will examine with the Customs authorities in New York at the end of next week. Pickerel's proposal provided for a sworn declaration by American importers, and perhaps also German exporters, on the method of payment and also proof of payment in cash or time draft at the time of the customs declaration. The prospects of the proposal are uncertain. At the same time Pickerel considers the cancellation of the Inland Account Procedure [*Inkoverfahren*] before April 23 as essential, especially as the application of arbitrary penalty duties under section 338 is to be feared if the procedure is continued. Pickerel thinks that the Treasury must cancel the imposition of the additional duties if the Inland Account Procedure is abolished, as the opinion of the Attorney-General on which they were based relates exclusively to the Inland Account Procedure. In reply to representations to that effect by Pickerel in his talk with Johnson today, the latter said without committing himself in any way that the Treasury would in that case abolish the additional duties.

2) Customs Attorney Laylin, Schröder Bank, Chase Bank and cotton exporters are conducting negotiations with the Treasury along the same lines with the object of securing the gradual release from the provisional 25 per cent additional duty also for transactions in blocked marks [*Sperrmark*] as well (paragraph 4 of telegram No. 96). On the other hand, they recommend the retention for the time being of the Inland Account Procedure, in order if necessary to give importers the opportunity after April 23 of settling the additional duty by payment from Inland Accounts.

3) I am more than ever convinced, especially on the basis of P[ickerel]'s report, that the Inland Account Procedure should be abolished and I recommend that all necessary measures for this should be prepared but that we delay putting them into effect until more details of the Treasury's attitude are ascertained in further negotiations next week. I will report on this by telegram.

THOMSEN

## No. 90

52/34590

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Political Department*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 25, 1939.

Admiral Canaris telephoned me today at 11 o'clock and told me the following about Polish mobilization measures:

- 1) Some 4,000 Polish troops are concentrated at Gdynia.
- 2) The troops of a garrison previously stationed in the southern part of the Corridor have been transferred to the immediate vicinity of the Danzig frontier.
- 3) Poland has mobilized three age-groups.

All these measures concern only the northern part of Poland; in the other districts of the country there is nothing to report militarily.

General Keitel does not believe in any aggressive intentions on the part of the Poles, neither, therefore, does he believe that Poland wishes rather to forestall us by a military occupation of Danzig, but attributes these measures to the generally noticeable nervousness of the Poles. In the General Staff, on the other hand, the tendency is to take a somewhat more serious view of the situation.<sup>1</sup>

BISMARCK

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "To the Foreign Minister: A warning to the Poles not to let matters come to a '21st May' with a subsequent '28th May' might be advisable. W[eizsäcker], 25/III." Reference is here made to the Czechoslovak crisis of May 1938. See vol. II of this Series, chapter III.

## No. 91

1975/438344

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 124 of March 24

BUCHAREST, March 25, 1939—12:30 p.m.

Received March 25—5:30 p.m.

Pol. IV 2125.

The Rumanian Minister in Budapest<sup>1</sup> was to speak to Csáky on behalf of his Government in order to make proposals for reciprocal demobilization.<sup>2</sup> Csáky refused to receive the Minister personally on the grounds that he did not negotiate at the point of the bayonet. Rumania wishes to make the following proposal: that the Hungarian troops be withdrawn 20 to 30 kilometres from the frontier, as had already been done with the Rumanian troops. Rumania would then at once start to demobilize, and Hungary would immediately follow suit, which was possible since the military action in Carpatho-Ukraine had in any case come to an end.

While Hungary remained fully armed on the frontier there could be no tranquillization in the South-East, especially as the incursion of Hungarian troops into Slovak territory, reported in the press today, had shown her neighbours the danger which threatened from Hungary.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> Reoul Bossy.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 82.

## No. 92

1625/388414

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*Telegram<sup>1</sup>

No. 125 of March 24

BUCHAREST, March 25, 1939—12:30 p.m.

Received March 25—4:00 p.m.

Pol. II 926.

With reference to your telegram No. 97 of March 21 (Pol. II 833).<sup>2</sup>

Gafencu, the Foreign Minister, asserts that no *démarche* has been made to him by the British Government for an association of "peaceful Powers". He has forestalled an enquiry by Britain, such as had been circulated to other States, by declaring from the outset to London and Paris that Rumania would in no circumstances join any group of powers which was directed against another. He had jettisoned all collective security plans. On the other hand, he had explained quite clearly to London and Paris why a *rapprochement* with Germany was necessary for Rumania and, despite warnings from many quarters, he had adhered firmly to this, as was proved by the Economic Treaty.<sup>3</sup>

He did not know whether an enquiry had been circulated by Britain regarding the protection of Rumania, this probably referred to the above-mentioned action.

All press reports about a conference to which Russia had also invited Rumania were pure invention. Similarly, he could assure me that neither had the King suggested any exchange of views about a guarantee of Rumania's frontiers by the Western Powers.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> This telegram was circulated to Missions in Europe for information on Mar. 27 (1625/388415).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 78.

## No. 93

1625/388412

*The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 17 of March 25

THE HAGUE, March 25, 1939—2:12 p.m.

Received March 25—4:00 p.m.

Pol. II 925.

I spoke to the Secretary-General of the Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup> today regarding a report in the Paris newspapers that France and Britain have

<sup>1</sup> Jonkheer A. M. Snouck Hurgronje.

pledged themselves in London to defend the Netherlands frontier in the event of a German attack. The Secretary-General said he had knowledge of the matter only through the Netherlands press. If the Western Great Powers made such agreements, the Netherlands could not prevent them from doing so. True to their policy of independence, the Netherlands themselves, however, would never in any circumstances accede to such agreements. Should war break out, the Netherlands would defend their neutrality to the utmost and, if necessary, resist by all possible means any armed invasion irrespective of whence it came.<sup>2</sup>

ZECH

<sup>2</sup> A draft telegram (not printed, 1625/388408-11) addressed to the Legations in Brussels, The Hague and Berne, dated Mar. 25 and marked by Ribbentrop: "not to be sent", stated that reports to hand indicated that the British and French Governments had concluded an agreement for mutual and unconditional support should Germany attack Belgium, the Netherlands or Switzerland. All press reports that Germany intended to attack these countries were malicious calumny. Appropriate *démarches* were to be made in Brussels, Berne and The Hague, in milder form in the last in view of the assurances contained in the document here printed.

## No. 94

2446/514896-07

*Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

Express Letter

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, March 25, 1939.

Kult. A 1368 g.

Germany's relationship with Italy in the Berlin-Rome Axis requires that, in political questions in the Mediterranean countries and particularly in the case of national community and minority problems in these countries, Italy's intentions should exert a decisive influence on Germany's attitude. Only in the Foreign Ministry is it possible to make a complete survey and decide in what instances relations with the aforementioned national and minority groups are appropriate and, if so, how these are to be developed. I would therefore request you to observe the following principles in future:

- 1) Our attitude regarding all national community and minority problems in the Mediterranean countries must be adjusted to meet the wishes of the Italian Government.
- 2) Any relations with national community and minority organizations in these countries may only be maintained if the assent of the

<sup>1</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "The departments are requested to specify those bodies who should be acquainted with this letter or its contents by this office (the Auslandsinstitut in Stuttgart, the V.D.A., etc.)." The letter was, in fact, circulated to all Ministries, and the Cultural Policy Department communicated the instructions contained therein to eighteen bodies (2446/514898-908).

Foreign Ministry thereto has been obtained in writing. In this event permission will be granted and the necessary guiding principles for developing relations of this kind will then be laid down by the Foreign Ministry or alternatively by the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.

3) In the interests of German-Italian relations, connections with Croat organizations<sup>2</sup> must on no account be maintained in the future.

I would request you to bring the above at once to the notice of those of your subordinate authorities, official departments, organizations, etc., which are concerned, and make it incumbent on them to conform unconditionally to the same.

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 55.

## No. 95

2002/442304-05

### *The Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Report No. 132

BRATISLAVA, March 25, 1939.

Received March 26.

Pol. IV 2134.

I transmit herewith a *note verbale* from the Slovak Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup> which reached me today.

I am not making any alteration to the wording and would beg to suggest that no great offence be taken at it. The Slovak Foreign Ministry is composed of a few young people with little experience who, however, do their best to write to us in German. The Ministry functions in three modest rooms of the Government building.

If I may comment on the *note verbale*, it aims at determining more closely the probable duration and character in international law of the German occupation of Slovak territory.

I can imagine that we, on our part, do not think it worth while to commit ourselves further.

Irrespective, however, of what decision is taken, I may perhaps be permitted to point out the prejudicial effect produced when our troops in the occupied area exercise sovereign rights beyond those of military necessity, and beyond the provisions of article 6 [*sic* ? 2] of the Treaty of Protection<sup>2</sup> and remove material. The material we need will not be lost to us, and there is therefore no necessity for simply carrying it off.

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2002/442306-08). The contents were as indicated above.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 40.

The second question which the Note apparently aims at clearing up is that of examining questions of legal succession relating to State property arising from the secession of Slovakia.

In this respect, too, we could, in my humble opinion, get our way and achieve our objective otherwise than by simply removing disputed State property.

I am assuming that it is our intention to create, in respect of Slovakia, a classic example of our conception of a protective relationship with a South-Eastern European Slav State.<sup>3</sup>

V. DRUFFEL

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Settled in oral discussion with Consul General von Druffel at Colonel Wagner's. A[ltenburg] 28/3." See document No. 117.

## No. 96

485/231692

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 262

BERLIN, March 25, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister today handed me the enclosed letter from the Hungarian Regent to the Führer.

For submission to the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "Herr Siegfried: Please ascertain that the letter has reached the Foreign Minister and consequently the Führer. W[eizsäcker] 27/[3]." (ii) "1) Herr Hewel has taken the letter with him to Munich. 2) Bring up in 3 days' time. S[iegfried] 27/3." (iii) "Herr Hewel states that the Führer has had the letter, which does not require an answer. Returned to the Foreign Ministry, where it has been filed (Büro RAM) S[iegfried] 26/4."

[Enclosure]

2006/442060-70

BUDAPEST, March 24, 1939.

Pol. IV 2281.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: I have with genuine pleasure and heartfelt thanks taken cognizance of the statement relating to Slovakia, which Your Excellency caused to be transmitted to me by my Minister in Berlin.<sup>2</sup> I was particularly gratified that Your Excellency appreciated so exactly the interests both of the Hungarian people and of those peoples who have lived with us on common soil for a thousand years. At the same time it is beyond doubt that the proposed solution best covers Germany's interests.

<sup>2</sup> This statement has not been found, but in St.S. No. 258 of Mar. 23 (7488/E540465) Weizsäcker recorded: "The Hungarian Minister, who was received by the Führer a few days ago and who was in Budapest for a day with a message to the Regent, returned bringing an expression of very great gratitude from the latter. The Führer's attitude to the problems at issue, which was in accord with Hungary's historical ideas, had made a decisive impression on the Regent and had given him very great satisfaction."

In order to ensure completely harmonious cooperation between our Governments, I would ask Your Excellency to allow my Minister in Berlin to submit the reasons necessitating a new frontier demarcation—in place of the frontier determined by Beneš—between the so-called Ruthenian [*russinischen*] territory and Slovakia.

As the Ruthenian territory has been united with Hungary, we desire to accord this area appropriate territorial autonomy and—in order at once to provide work for the population—to proceed immediately with the construction of dams for the exploitation of the water-power. My Government have begun preparatory work on this.

In expressing once more my warmest and most heartfelt thanks for the friendship and understanding shown towards Hungary,

I remain etc.,

HORTHY<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This letter is stamped: "Seen by the Führer, March 25, 1939" and bears the marginal note: "The Führer wishes this letter to be filed in the Foreign Ministry. H[e]w[el]."

## No. 97

169/82515

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 264

BERLIN, March 25, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister asked me today, obviously on instructions from Budapest, about rumours that the German economic Treaty with Rumania<sup>1</sup> had been linked with some political concession or other to Rumania. Rumanian sources indicated, in fact, that we had given the Rumanians a frontier guarantee against Hungary.

I flatly denied this rumour to the Hungarian Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 78.

## No. 98

350/202230

### *Minute by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, March 25, 1939.

zu Pol. I M 1101 g<sup>1</sup> Ang. III.

In accordance with instructions, I have informed OKW that the Foreign Ministry attaches great importance to the speediest possible evacuation of occupied Slovak territory extending beyond the demarcation line laid down by Treaty. Should the completion of the

<sup>1</sup> Not found.



evacuation not be possible forthwith, the Foreign Ministry considers it desirable that a beginning at least be made as soon as possible by measures which will also be obvious to the Slovak Government.

OKW undertook to transmit this request to the competent authorities.

V. NOSTITZ

## No. 99

Nuremberg document 100-R  
Exhibit USA-121

### *Directive from the Führer to the Commander in Chief of the Army on March 25, 1939<sup>1</sup>*

#### *Danzig question*

L[ipski] is returning from Warsaw on Sunday, March 26. His mission was to enquire there whether Poland was ready to make an arrangement about Danzig. The Führer left Berlin on the evening of March 25 and does not wish to be here when L[ipski] returns. For the present R[ibbentrop] is to conduct the negotiations. The Führer *does not* wish to solve the Danzig question by force however. He does not wish to drive Poland into the arms of Britain by this.

A possible military occupation of Danzig could be contemplated only if L[ipski] gave an indication that the Polish Government could not justify voluntary cession of Danzig to their own people and that a *fait accompli* would make a solution easier to them.

#### *Polish question*

For the present the Führer does not intend to solve the Polish question. However, it should now be worked upon. A solution in the near future would have to be based on especially favourable political preconditions. In such a case Poland would have to be so beaten down that, during the next few decades, she need not be taken into account as a political factor. In a solution of this kind the Führer envisaged an advanced frontier, extending from the eastern border of East Prussia to the eastern tip of Silesia. The questions of evacuation and resettlement still remain open. The Führer *does not* wish to enter the Ukraine. Possibly a Ukrainian State might be established. But these questions too still remain open.

#### *Slovak question*

How long the Führer will adhere to the Treaty concluded with Slovakia<sup>2</sup> is doubtful. The High Command of the Army has the

<sup>1</sup> The German text of this document is printed in *Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal* (Nuremberg, 1947-49) (hereinafter cited as *Trial of the Major War Criminals*), vol. xxxviii, pp. 274-276.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 40.

impression that when the time comes the Führer will rid himself of this, and will use Slovakia as a political bargaining counter between himself, Poland and Hungary. For the time being, however, Hungary is to be kept in check.

The Führer agrees with the proposed frontier delimitation (line of the Waag). Should Slovakia be partitioned, the eastern frontier (Nitra line) is to become the frontier and Bratislava is to be included. There may be a plebiscite in Bratislava, but the Führer believes there will be no difficulties, as the town has no leanings towards Hungary.

*Engerau is intended to become a permanent Garrison*

Col. General Keitel is to notify the Slovak Government, through the Foreign Ministry, that no armed Slovak units (Hlinka guards) may be maintained or garrisoned this side of the Waag frontier. They are to be sent to the new Slovak territory. The Hlinka guards are to be disarmed.

A demand shall be addressed to the Slovaks through the Foreign Ministry that all weapons we want and which are still in Slovakia shall be surrendered to us against payment on the basis of the agreement between our Army and the Czech troops. The millions which we intend to sink in Slovakia in any case are to be used for this purpose.

#### *Czech Protectorate*

The Army Groups are to be asked again if the demand for the surrender of all arms within a limited time and under threat of severe penalties should be repeated once more.

We shall take on all the war material of the former Czechia without payment. On the other hand, the guns bought by contract before February 15 will be paid for.

Officers of the Czech Army will be provided for in accordance with the discussions between General Reinecke, Colonel Wagner and Burgsdorf of the High Command of the Army. Their pensions shall assure them a good standard of living in order to prevent discontent. We may take over payment of the pensions or a part thereof—as it were in payment of the captured war material. Pensions—no lump sums—to keep a hold on these people. That is how we should negotiate.

Questions should be settled in principle *before* executive power is handed over. Supreme Headquarters of the Army has suggested April 6 as the final date for handing over executive power. The Führer agrees.

H[ácha] shall be directed to change his residence to some place where he can do no harm. The request, however, must come from Hácha.

Should the Czechs wish to set up a labour service, the matter is to be dealt with in a dilatory manner. The Czechs must not be consolidated by concentrations of this kind. The settlement of this question falls within Germany's competence.

Czechia is to be granted a certain measure of sovereignty in financial matters: somewhat on the lines of that formerly accorded to Bavaria. On the debt settlement, the Führer is not yet clear. The change over to the mark will be made at a suitable opportunity.

Bohemia and Moravia are to make annual contributions to the German exchequer. The extent of these shall be determined on the basis of the sums formerly budgeted for the Czech Army.

The Führer has no objection to the withdrawal of troops once disarmament has been carried out. However, he does not wish to prejudice the Polish situation, which has not yet been cleared up.

He is to be asked again about this on Monday.

When Neurath takes over there will be rather more troops in the Protectorate than will remain permanently. Movements are therefore agreed to.

Before Neurath takes over, the Führer wishes to have another talk with the High Command of the Army, Friderici?, etc.

#### *Britain—France*

Relations have apparently slightly cooled, because France realizes that Britain is trying to harness her to her waggon.

Britain is said to have told France that she must satisfy Italy's wishes in the Mediterranean.

#### *Balkans*

The Führer wants to have armaments deals with the Balkan countries. But only against payment in foreign currency or goods representing foreign currency. Becker is to report orally on standardization of calibres and Skoda.

(Original written by hand by Lt. Col. Siewirt,  
1st Officer of the General Staff.)

Certified correct.

[signature illegible]

Colonel of the General Staff

No. 100

9017/E694434-37

#### *The Führer and Chancellor to the Head of the Italian Government<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, March 25, 1939.

DUCE: You have lived to see the 20th anniversary<sup>2</sup> of the day on which the foundation stone of Fascism was laid. Since 1920 the new

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the Italian. No German text of this letter or indication of the method of delivery has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. For the Italian text see Mario Toscano, *Le Origini del Patto d'Acciaio*, p. 95, note 110.

<sup>2</sup> Mussolini founded his first *Fascio di combattimento* in Milan on Mar. 26, 1919.

history of your people and of your country, which found its crowning success in the rebuilding of the Roman Empire, is inseparably associated with your name and the name of your movement. But apart from that, I am aware of this: that from that day the evolution of Europe and, with it, the evolution of mankind, has been directed into a new channel. One cannot imagine what consequences for the West would have followed in the train of a bolshevization of Italy. There is no doubt that, but for your historic action in founding Fascism, Italy would have been wedded to this bolshevization. Even if in the life of a nation it is for the most part difficult to decide what component parts make up the knowledge of the individual or what contributions are made by and large by the national attitude and actions, nevertheless, Duce, your own contribution and the example of Fascism can be established on the basis of many positive results. The regeneration in the 20th century not only of Italy but also of Europe will be linked for ever with your name. I have pondered deeply on these problems. But I think I can assure you in all sincerity, Duce, that, apart from those of your own people, you can receive from no one more heartfelt good wishes for your work, now twenty years old, than those of us Germans and of myself. There is, moreover, so much similarity in the development of our two ideologies and in our two revolutions, that one is tempted to believe in a single decision on the part of Providence. Yet in my eyes, nothing can link the destinies of the German and Italian peoples more than the hellish hatred which is poured out on them by the rest of the world, although we have done it no harm. You, Duce, had knowledge and experience of the attitude of these adversaries when you were creating your Empire. We Germans have experienced it during the past twelve months, when we were putting an end to a situation unbearable from the national and military point of view.

By means of this letter, I wish to assure you once more that during the last twelve months the German people, my movement and above all myself have experienced not only the enmity of these foreign countries—if indeed we did not already know of it—but we have also, all of us, taken an unalterable decision: whatever may be the path you tread, Duce, you shall see in me and in us Germans your unchanging friends. And you shall see in this friendship not only a symbol of an attachment which is purely platonic, but you may regard it as the immutable decision to bear, if necessary, even at the most difficult times, the direst consequences of this solidarity.

Let me therefore express once more to you and to the Italian people, in my name and especially in the name of my movement, my good wishes for the return of a day to which not only Italy but also Germany owes so much.

With undying friendship,

Yours,

ADOLF HITLER

## No. 101

52/34501-03

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

RM 20

BERLIN, March 26, 1939.

I received Lipski, the Polish Ambassador, at 12:30 today.

Ambassador Lipski handed me the attached memorandum by the Polish Government, which I read through in his presence.

After I had taken note of the contents, I replied to Ambassador Lipski that in my personal opinion the Polish viewpoint could not form the basis for a German-Polish solution. The sole possible solution of the problem could only be the reincorporation of Danzig in the German Reich and the creation of an extraterritorial road and rail link between the Reich and East Prussia.

In this connection, I referred Ambassador Lipski to the reports<sup>2</sup> to hand on Polish troop concentrations and warned him of possible consequences. The events seemed to me to be a strange answer to my recent offer of a final settlement of the German-Polish relationship. If things went on in this way a serious situation might soon arise. I could inform Ambassador Lipski that for example a violation of the sovereignty of Danzig territory by Polish troops would be regarded by Germany in the same way as a violation of the Reich frontiers.

Ambassador Lipski energetically denied that Poland had any military intentions towards Danzig. The troop movements undertaken by Poland merely represented precautionary measures.

I then put the question to Ambassador Lipski whether, as soon as the situation had calmed down somewhat, the Polish Government would not again consider the German proposal so that a solution might be arrived at on the basis proposed by us of the reunion of Danzig and the extraterritorial rail and *Autobahn* link.

Ambassador Lipski answered that Poland would certainly study the question further and was willing to do everything to reach agreement.

I told Ambassador Lipski that I would report to the Führer at once. In my view the main thing was that the Führer should not get the impression that Poland was simply unwilling.

Ambassador Lipski asked me to have the questions studied again by Germany from every point of view and he wondered if there was not a prospect of perhaps reaching an acceptable solution on the basis of Polish ideas.

When I put the definite question whether in his view the Polish Government might state that they disagreed with the solution proposed by Germany, Ambassador Lipski gave an evasive answer.

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 103.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 90.

Ambassador Lipski stated that Foreign Minister Beck would gladly come to Berlin in accordance with our suggestion,<sup>3</sup> but it seemed to him advisable that the questions should have been suitably prepared from the diplomatic angle beforehand.

At the close of our conversation, I left Ambassador Lipski in no doubt that in my view the Polish proposals could not be regarded by the Führer as satisfactory; only the definite re-incorporation of Danzig, an extraterritorial link with East Prussia, and a 25 year non-aggression treaty with frontier guarantees, and cooperation in the Slovak question could, in the German view, lead to a final settlement.

I have the impression:

1) that the military measures taken by Poland are of a defensive nature. Intentions to intervene in Danzig by force of arms probably do not exist at present.

2) Poland would like to get off as cheaply as possible in the present discussions.

3) Poland's compromise proposal might not represent the Polish Government's last word.

On the basis of these impressions I should like to propose the following procedure to the Führer:

1) The Polish press attacks should be answered gradually in the German press, without, however, bringing things to a head.

2) In a short time the Polish Ambassador should be told by me that the Polish proposals do not represent a basis for negotiations. Only an acceptance of the basis for negotiations proposed by Germany could lead to a solution.

3) If, after allowing an interval to watch developments, the Polish military measures were not gradually reduced, M. Lipski's attention would again have to be drawn to the difficult situation arising therefrom and it would have to be pointed out that, if things went on in this way, they would end badly.<sup>4</sup>

RIBBENTROP

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 61.

<sup>4</sup> For Lipski's account of this conversation see the *Polish White Book*, No. 63.

[Enclosure]

903/294052-55

# I

As in the past, so today, the Polish Government ascribe full importance to the maintenance of good-neighbourly relations with the German Reich to the utmost extent.

The Polish Government have given clear proof of this attitude by being one of the first foreign Governments to initiate friendly relations with the German Reich already in 1933 and to enter into negotiations which

led to the conclusion of the Polish-German Declaration of January 26, 1934.<sup>5</sup>

Here may also be mentioned the friendly attitude adopted by Poland to the National Socialist Senate in Danzig.

During the following five years, the Polish Government in their political activity in the international sphere have always avoided participating in actions directed against the German Reich.

Finally, it is well known that in the autumn of 1938, Poland's resolute attitude contributed in considerable degree to the avoidance of an armed conflict in connection with the accomplishment of the German demands.<sup>6</sup>

## II

In the question of transit traffic between the German Reich and East Prussia as well as in the question of the Free City of Danzig, questions where hitherto understanding between the two Governments has always been achieved, and on which the German Government have now put forward new suggestions, the Polish Government take the following view:

a) The Polish Government have no interest in creating any difficulties in traffic between East Prussia and the rest of the Reich. For that reason, despite many changes which have occurred in the last few years by comparison with previous times (e.g., in the question of transfer of payments), the Polish Government have not only not raised any difficulties in the privileged rail transit traffic but have undertaken the financial clearing for this transit traffic with due consideration for German interests.

This being their attitude, the Polish Government are prepared jointly with the German Government to study means of further simplifying and facilitating rail and road traffic between East Prussia and the rest of the Reich so that German travellers may be saved inconvenience when using these ways of communication. Technical experts could begin working out proposals for realizing this aim.

But all concessions could, however, only be granted on the Polish side, within the limits of Polish sovereignty—therefore there can be no question of extraterritorial status for the ways of communication. While making this reservation, the Polish Government intend to meet German wishes very liberally.

b) As far as the Free City of Danzig is concerned, it may be recalled that for some time now the Polish Government, recognizing the need

<sup>5</sup> By this Declaration of Non-Aggression and Understanding, signed at Berlin, which was to be valid for ten years, both Governments decided to base their mutual relations on the Pact of Paris (Kellogg-Briand Pact), of Aug. 27, 1928. For the text of the Declaration see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 137, pp. 495-496.

<sup>6</sup> In the instructions by Beck to Lipski, printed as No. 62 in the *Polish White Book*, this paragraph is not included.

for a settlement of this question by way of an understanding between Warsaw and Berlin, have put forward corresponding suggestions. This seemed to them particularly appropriate given the position of the League of Nations, which is no longer fully able to fulfil the obligations it has undertaken towards the Free City of Danzig.

As appeared from the previous Polish-German conversations, there existed no difference of opinion on the basic approach, namely that the Polish Government do not aim at hindering the German population of the Free City in their own way of life, that on the other hand the German Government respect Polish rights as well as the economic, maritime and transport interests, and the rights of the Polish population in the Free City. As these two questions are both fundamental, the Polish Government believe that it should be possible to find a solution based on a joint Polish-German guarantee for the Free City of Danzig. This guarantee would, on the one hand, satisfy the free development of the German national community and its political way of life, and on the other hand, would safeguard Polish rights and interests. Polish interests, moreover, coincide with the economic interests of the population of the Free City; as for centuries the prosperity of the latter has depended on Polish overseas trade.

In contrast to the above-mentioned problem of facilitating communications which, in the view of the Polish Government, is primarily of a technical nature and a matter for experts, the political principles in the question of the Free City must first be discussed between the Polish and German Governments, and to the end that in this organism, in accordance with the words used by the Reich Chancellor in February 1938, Poland should respect the national character of the Free City and the Free City and Germany should respect the rights and interests of Poland.

The Polish Government would consider it desirable, in order to stabilize conditions in this part of Europe, that an exchange of views on both the problems referred to above, which should be dealt with jointly, should take place as soon as possible, in order thereby to find a basis for the future consolidation of mutual good-neighbourly relations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Words written across the face of page 1 (i.e., the first five paragraphs as here printed) of this document in Ribbentrop's handwriting appear to read: "F[ührer]. Not the place on which we can negotiate. 1. [word illegible]. 2. Slov[ak?] position hand of French and British. Future—whether to Poland's advantage. [Slow. Position Hand Franzosen Engländer. Zukunft ob zum Heil Polens.]"



## No. 102

2050/447350-61

*The State Secretary to the Legation in the Protectorate*

Telegram

No. 128

BERLIN, March 26, 1939—[2:20 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>[Received March 26—4:00 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>

For Ambassador Ritter.

In the former Czecho-Slovak diplomatic and consular Missions abroad, especially in so far as they are under British, French, American and Soviet influence, there is an increasingly stubborn resistance to the instructions issued by the former Foreign Ministry in Prague relating to the smooth transfer of their affairs to the German representatives.<sup>2</sup> The relevant reports on this are being and will continue to be sent to you regularly. The motive power behind this resistance is to be found partly in an attachment to the former Beneš system, but mostly in those Governments to which these missions were accredited. These former Czecho-Slovak Missions which are behaving so mistakenly or are being misused by foreign countries, are rendering an ill service to themselves and to the interests of the Protectorate. Hence we are ourselves not disposed to continue to tolerate these manoeuvres and propose taking counter measures against the refractory heads of Missions, the personnel they are misleading, and their home interests. However, we intend to make the Prague Government themselves primarily responsible. Please call on the former Foreign Minister, Chvalkovský, during the course of Monday, March 27, and inform him of the general measures which the Prague Government must now take without delay, so as to set matters in order. The measures to be specified remain to be confirmed in detail by telephone with the Foreign Ministry in the course of Monday morning. They will include withdrawal of protection, expatriation, freezing of all salaries, sequestration of property and income of the persons themselves and their dependents, etc. It will also be expedient, in one or other particularly crass case, to take immediate measures, to which publicity can be given, which may serve as an example and produce a salutary effect. You are requested to get in touch with the Foreign Ministry on the subject by telephone during the morning of the 27th.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Prague copy (28/19481-82).<sup>2</sup> See document No. 5.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On March 26, the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Fascist Formations, Mussolini made a speech at the

Mussolini Forum in Rome. He formulated that part of his speech which dealt with international questions under the following five heads:—

1. Although he would consider perpetual peace as a catastrophe for civilization, he thought a long period of peace was necessary to safeguard European civilization in its development. But, although recently solicited [see document No. 114 below], Italy would not take the initiative until her sacrosanct rights had been recognized.

2. The period of the *tours de valse* [i.e., taking turns with different partners] was over. The Axis, invulnerable to any attempts to cause rifts in it, was a meeting between two revolutions "in absolute antithesis to any other conception of modern civilization". What had happened in Central Europe was bound to happen. If the great democracies wept over the premature and somewhat dishonourable end of their dearest creation, that was an excellent reason for Italians not to associate themselves with them. When a people possessed of large numbers of men and immense stores of arms was not capable of a gesture, that showed it to be overripe for its new destiny. But, if the desired coalition against the authoritarian regimes were to come into being, these last would counter-attack in every corner of the globe.

3. The barricades between France and Italy raised by the Spanish war [spoken of in his speech of May 14, 1938, at Genoa] could be regarded as almost entirely demolished. The impending collapse of Madrid would strike the last blow. The Italian problems in relation to France were of a colonial character—Tunis, Jibuti, the Suez Canal. Although the French Government were free to refuse to enter even a simple discussion, in that case they would have no cause to lament if the furrow [*solco*] between the two countries became too wide to be filled. Relations between States were relations of force only.

4. Geographically, historically, politically, militarily, the Mediterranean was a vital area for Italy. Italian interests were "preeminent but not exclusive in relation to the Slavs" in the Adriatic.

5. Italy had to arm at whatever cost, even if the Italians had to make a clean sheet of everything that was called civil life.

The full text in Italian of this speech will be found in Benito Mussolini: *Scritti e Discorsi, Edizione Definitiva XII* (Milan, 1939), pp. 154-160.]

## No. 103

1813/415178-79

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland*

Telegram

No. 76

BERLIN, March 27, 1939—12:00 noon.  
e.o. Pol. V 2727.

For the Ambassador.

For your preliminary and personal information:

The Foreign Minister received the Polish Ambassador on Sunday at midday.<sup>1</sup> The latter announced that Minister Beck was ready for a discussion in Berlin, but only after tangible results of present talks had been achieved through diplomatic channels. Lipski left a memorandum which, in effect, offers a bilateral German-Polish guarantee for the Free City of Danzig instead of the moribund guarantee of the League of Nations. Instead of an extraterritorial strip through the corridor for *Autobahn* and railway, the Polish Government offer far-reaching traffic concessions to and from East Prussia, while still maintaining Polish sovereignty. Lipski characterized the present military measures by Poland as purely defensive.

The Foreign Minister told the Ambassador that the Polish offer was very unsatisfactory, and reserved his answer until after consultation with the Führer. (At present it is not to be expected that this answer will be forthcoming very quickly.) The Foreign Minister urgently recommended that the military measures should be rescinded, pointing to the example of Czechoslovakia in May last year. The Foreign Minister described any advance of Polish soldiers into Danzig as constituting a *casus belli* for us.

Details to follow later.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Mar. 26. See document No. 101.

## No. 104

7485/E540438

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 105 of March 27

WASHINGTON, March 27, 1939—12:36 p.m.  
Received March 27—8:55 p.m.  
W VIIla 705.1) With reference to your telegram No. 94 of March 23.<sup>1</sup>

I have today sent a Note to the Secretary of State in the sense of part 1, para. 1, without requesting a reply. In view of the additional

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 71.

customs duties now imposed, and the completely negative attitude of the American Government in the same matter on the occasion of the reunion of Austria and of the Sudetenland, it is certain that the Treasury will not lift or modify the order of March 18. Therefore, I did not consider even oral representations to be advisable in view of the tension prevailing here at present.

2) Note in accordance with instructions in your communication of March 7, W VIIIa 416,<sup>2</sup> handed over today.

THOMSEN

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7485/E540429-35). This despatch instructed Thomsen to present a Note stating Germany's intention to incorporate Austria and the Sudetenland into the German customs area in the near future.

## No. 105

5570/E308822

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 74 of March 27

BELGRADE, March 27, 1939—8:00 p.m.

Received March 27—10:50 p.m.

W 449 g.

With reference to my telegram No. 53 of March 18.<sup>1</sup>

The representatives of the aircraft industry (Reichsverband-Dornier-Messerschmitt) who have arrived here, state that on instructions from the Reich Ministry for Air, issued at the instigation of the Foreign Ministry, they have been forbidden until further notice to submit tenders for the supply of aircraft which have been announced here and are awaited by the Yugoslav War Ministry.

The representatives of these firms and the Air Attaché, too, are afraid that, despite previous assurances, a fresh delay in submitting the tenders may cause grave resentment here and give rival French and British firms an opportunity for disruptive manoeuvres.

If the lifting of the ban on the tenders cannot be expected in the next few days, I propose that the representatives of the firms be authorized to submit their tenders on the express condition that the total armaments credit is approved by the competent Reich departments.

HEEREN

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 21.

## No. 106

2050/447363

*The Legation in the Protectorate to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 151 of March 27

PRAGUE, March 27, 1939—8:25 p.m.

Received March 27—10:50 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 128 of March 26.<sup>1</sup>

1) Salaries of refractory Foreign Ministry officials have been stopped since Thursday of last week.

2) Last Saturday I had the bank accounts here stopped of the Ministers or Chargés d'Affaires in Paris, London, Washington, Warsaw, Moscow and Santiago. After the inspection of the tax-returns, which is taking place today, I will also have any remaining property confiscated.

3) Legislative measures requisite for expatriation and expropriation will be decided upon at today's Cabinet meeting.

4) I suggest postponing publication until measures under paragraph 3 are decided upon. I should then prefer publication to be effected by the Prague Government.

RITTER  
HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 102.

## No. 107

2422/511705-13

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 556

WASHINGTON, March 27, 1939.

Received April 5.

Pol. IX 602.

Subject: American foreign policy; its aims and limitations.

The American Government's pronouncements and measures of the last few weeks show ever more clearly that President Roosevelt's bid for leadership in matters of world politics is aimed at annihilating National Socialist Germany with all means available, and hence at nullifying the New Order in Europe.

In order to save appearances the President has, of course, announced in his message to Congress<sup>1</sup> that America, in her struggle against "lawlessness and blackmail", will not use war measures, but only "measures

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<sup>1</sup> See *Congressional Record*, vol. 84, pp. 76-79. The relevant passages from this message are printed in *Peace and War*, No. 124.

short of war";<sup>2</sup> but no one can fail to observe that America has already ventured dangerously far along a road which must lead, both at home and abroad, to encouraging a desire for war.

On threadbare pretexts an economic war has been unleashed against Germany. America's own economic interests have been deliberately disregarded. Far-reaching support against Germany has been partly promised to the western "Democracies", and partly already accorded. The Neutrality Act<sup>3</sup> is either to lapse or to be modified in favour of France and Britain. The Latin American Republics are being wooed by all means available and, not least, by delivery of war materials at cost price. American gold and American credits are being employed in South America for the sole purpose of combating Germany's exports. America's own armaments are going up by leaps and bounds.

One must start from the assumption that Roosevelt as a politician is sufficiently a realist to recognize the dangers of a new world war, and that his provocative attitude, the help he has accorded to the Democracies, and his deliberate affronts to the totalitarian Powers are not merely to be traced to the hypocritically democratic principles which he voices on every occasion. Roosevelt is inwardly convinced that Germany is the enemy who must be crushed, because she has so upset the balance of power and the *status quo*, that America also will feel the consequences should she fail to get in first. If the totalitarian Powers establish and consolidate their hegemony in Europe, America will, in Roosevelt's view, be manoeuvred sooner or later into a situation which can only end in humiliation and ignominy. Roosevelt is glad of any expedient which will make this prospect illusory now. He does not believe in the possibility of maintaining peace, and reckons on a trial of strength between the totalitarian Powers and the democracies. These are America's first line of defence; should this fall, America's role as a great Power would, in Roosevelt's view, be finished. Roosevelt's role as a sort of presumptuous *arbiter mundi* is not to be traced to the desire that the hegemony of the world should fall to America, by virtue of her might and greatness. In addition to being indicative of an overdose of arrogance, it is much rather a sign of inner weakness and perplexity in face of the New Order in Europe, with its repercussions and reciprocal effects on the position in the Far East, a fact which is borne out by the view that America's help might come too late if she were not already prepared now.

For only if this help is supplied in good time can it be a decisive factor. The experiences of the World War have taught that years are necessary in order to place America's industry on a war footing. This mistake is not to be repeated under Roosevelt's leadership. Hence American

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> For the so-called "Neutrality Act" of May 1, 1937, see *Peace and War*, No. 83.

"war-potential" is now being gradually reorganized for a state of emergency. The armament industry is receiving "trial orders"; war material, particularly aircraft, is being delivered to Britain and France in order to speed up production; raw materials of military importance which are not available in the United States are being imported and stock-piled by way of precaution; the establishment of an armament industry in Canada is being promoted; and manoeuvres of the armed forces on land, sea and in the air are based on objectives far transcending the requirements of national defence. At this stage of the preparations nothing is said of sending troops to theatres of war outside America because public opinion is, at present, not prepared for this. Roosevelt and his advisers are also probably of the opinion that, under present conditions, the despatch of troops to Europe after the outbreak of war would be less decisive for its outcome than if the whole of America's economic might were made available in good time.

In order to further this policy, Roosevelt is having recourse to the most ruthless propaganda, and he is being assisted by those forces which see their triumph, and their business, in the annihilation of Germany. The propaganda of Britain, Jewry and the Communists in brotherly association has succeeded with the means at its disposal for influencing public opinion in press, radio and cinema, in stirring up the American people to a degree which is not even comparable with the psychosis of the World War years, but far transcends it. The credulous and easily led majority of the mentally dull American people has completely succumbed to the insidious propaganda that Germany is America's "Enemy No. 1",<sup>2</sup> that Germany intends to attack America, to impose its system upon her, has for this purpose covered the country with a network of spies and agents, is preparing for acts of sabotage in case of war and is, in short, that "Aggressor Nation" against which the whole world, including Russia, must defend itself. Even comparatively reasonable people believe in the propaganda arguments that Germany's aspirations for colonies are merely to be traced to the desire to be in a position to attack America from the west coast of Africa with squadrons of aircraft, and that Germany's struggle for the Latin American markets has only been entered upon in order to "liberate the German minorities" there by annexation of their areas of colonization; and thereby, at the same time, to obtain air bases from which to attack the Panama Canal. Propaganda flourishes in such fertile soil. In general, the average American understands nothing of European history and European politics. He has an opinion on everything, however, if it is only suggested to him often enough. In addition, there is the proneness to wild enthusiasm and the emotionalism for which the American is well known; instruments upon which every agitator and every world reformer can play. After the American people have been persuaded that their most sacrosanct possessions are

threatened, it only needs, in certain circumstances, outside provocation to bring public opinion to boiling point. As things are today, the vast majority of the American people agree with the President's policy, that is, with intimidation of the totalitarian Powers by means "short of war";<sup>2</sup> but the notion of having to go to France for this policy is unacceptable to them, and even propaganda cannot be expected to change them immediately in this respect, even after the outbreak of a war in Europe. The picture would in all likelihood, however, immediately change with the arrival of the first news of the effect of air attacks on British or French cities and on the civilian population (they would not be so sensitive in respect of German cities) or indeed when the first American victims of this air war came to be lamented. It would then need comparatively little effort to get the American people into a state of war fever similar to that which existed after the torpedoing of the "Lusitania".

Other circles, too, are utilizing the heat of this propaganda against Germany to cook their own soup; circles which would be glad to take the war psychosis into their calculations, because it would serve their political and other business ends if America were to participate most actively in a war; circles which, however, are themselves icy cold and sober in their calculations while engaging in this business. Among them are the politicians who are rendered uneasy by the chaotic state of domestic policy throughout the country, and who would like to overcome, at one blow, unemployment and all its attendant dangers. There are, moreover, the armament industrialists who scent big business. And, above all, there are the Communists, who see themselves getting nearer their goal of making a Soviet State of America if the whole world—with the exception of Russia—is embroiled in a life and death struggle. It is these circles, too, which are striving to reinforce America's willingness to participate by arguing that Germany is not economically in a position to wage a protracted war, but would collapse within a few months from lack of raw materials, and that therefore the time to strike is now or never.

If this one-sided picture of American public opinion under Roosevelt's leadership were regarded as the only one, a false impression would be gained of the forces and counter-forces in American politics, and their possibilities and prospects. Roosevelt's "bold" foreign policy is popular with the broad masses on whom he relies; but he is acutely aware that it is not supported by many leading and authoritative circles. The bitterest enemies of his foreign policy are in the ranks of his own Party; but they do not oppose him in the field of foreign policy because of their resentment to his domestic policy. No, they are of the opinion that Roosevelt's policy will sooner or later plunge the country into war, and they consider it their duty, as patriots, to oppose this policy without regard to Party political ties. Like the Republicans, who are in



principle opposed to Roosevelt's adventurous foreign policy, these men, leaders in the Senate and House of Representatives, express themselves as wholly in favour of America's being suitably prepared for defence; they have, however, important reasons for not wishing America to become involved in European conflicts, and they express these reasons in Congress, as well as over the radio and in the press—in so far as these are available to them. In this connection, the Presidential election of 1940 is already casting its shadow before and, seen in the light of American foreign policy, it assumes especial significance. It would be wrong to suppose that, in general, Roosevelt's critics adopt, or will adopt, a substantially different attitude towards Germany and the totalitarian Powers. They have a different perspective, and approach matters from the purely American point of view, needs and national interests. For them, as American isolationists, it is an axiom wholly compatible with American national dignity that America is 3,000 sea-miles distant from the nearest continent, and is therefore unassailable. It does not fill them with satisfaction to act as the world's schoolmaster, for they realize America's limited possibilities with regard to both foreign and domestic policy, and the everlasting dependence upon British policy is a thorn in their flesh.

Whether or not America is prepared and in a position to take an active part in a world war cannot irrefutably be affirmed or denied. However, on sober consideration, the reasons against participation in war are self-evident, and they can hardly be countered with factual arguments even by Americans unless Roosevelt's uneasiness regarding the threat to America's position as a World Power and to her world prestige is regarded as justifiable.

The experiences of the World War are still all too fresh in the memories of the American generation of today to allow them to contemplate, as desirable or without danger, a repetition of the abortive experiment of "making the world safe for democracy".<sup>2</sup> The war debts have not been paid, but their own war loans must be redeemed and interest paid on them. The country is groaning under the heavy burden of taxation and unbridled expenditure. In spite of the influx of gold from all over the world, the budget deficit is becoming ever greater, and the unemployment figure remains constant. The critics ask: How can one, under such circumstances, lead the American people into a war? And what are the foreseeable consequences of a war? Nothing less than the establishment of a dictatorship, the very thing which we supposedly wish to combat; and indeed, a dictatorship which will, in all likelihood, never again give place to an old, sound democracy. Before America ventures upon experiments in foreign policy, she should first set her own house in order; diversionary manoeuvres cannot disguise the gravity of the domestic situation. More and more frequently one hears voices warning against interfering in European affairs which

do not concern America. Over there, it is much less a question of ideological differences, as is always maintained here, than of the decision of imperialist and geopolitical points of controversy which had already existed for centuries when America developed into independent nationhood. In face of the unbridled attacks by the American press and public opinion on the policies of Germany, Italy and Japan, voices are happily not lacking which reproach the "peace-loving" Democracies with their own sins, past and present. The history of the origins of the British and French World Empires is examined under the microscope, and the hypocrisy of the arguments which the "sated" nations utilize in the struggle against the "have nots"<sup>2</sup> is pulled to pieces. Even the Communist danger is recognized to an increasing degree. Whenever this problem is brought up, the idea of entering into a war, with Russia as a possible ally, finds little approval, and many Americans are also conscious of the danger threatening civilization if Russia should manage to keep out of a conflict. The Cassandra cries which conjure up the danger of a German attack on America are countered by the retort that Germany—as well as Italy and Japan—will probably be so busy with the consolidation of their possessions that even after a war victorious for them, they themselves will be by no means in a position to consider an American adventure. And even if it be admitted that the danger exists, the American defence forces would be perfectly able to beat off any attack on American territory.

These predominant considerations of domestic policy must be supplemented by an examination of America's position in foreign policy, a position which robs the American magnetic field of much of the power of attraction ascribed to it by Roosevelt. Japan, even though fully occupied with China, is not America's ally today as in 1917. America's western flank would be exposed if American armed forces should become involved in a European conflict. Even if America does not take an active part in a war at the outset, her capacity for action will be hampered by the incalculable factor of Japan. For America, too, a war on two fronts is no longer a mere chimera. In any case, forces are being pinned down which might be needed in other sectors. America cannot under any circumstances consider an offensive war against Japan; nor would she come to Britain's assistance if Britain's Far Eastern possessions were attacked by Japan. As the case of Guam<sup>4</sup> has shown, the signs indicate that America is not only not seeking a war with Japan but will studiously avoid it. The reasons for this are, on the one hand, her desire to maintain and, where possible, to increase her trade with Japan and, on the other hand, her fear of being denied access by Japan to raw materials in the Malayan islands.

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<sup>4</sup> The proposal to spend \$5,000,000 on harbour improvements on the island of Guam was defeated in the House of Representatives on Feb. 23, by 205 votes to 168.

This fear also partly explains the United States' penetration of Latin America. It is hoped to obtain there, with United States capital, substitutes for raw materials which may perhaps be lost. In spite of all the optimism, externally displayed, regarding South America's loyal friendship under the "Good-Neighbour Policy",<sup>2</sup> there are no illusions here as to the reliability of the new friends. So much the more unscrupulous in its manifestations is United States policy, which does not hesitate to connive with any Latin American Battista [sic], Trujillo or Vargas,<sup>5</sup> but which cannot heap sufficient invective upon true national leaders. There is complete awareness here that Latin America inclines towards Europe from tradition and economic advantage and there is, by this token, fear of the repercussions on Latin America of Nationalist Spain's victory.

Finally, into the considerations of American policy there creeps the anxiety as to whether the European democracies, for whose ideals America is ready to sacrifice much, will always remain what they at present appear to be, that is, democracies. The conferment of dictatorial powers on Daladier<sup>6</sup> has had an extremely sobering effect here, although the attempt is made to justify the need of these powers by reference to the danger threatening from Germany and Italy.

Roosevelt believes that he is serving peace by piling up as much inflammable material as possible; no one will glorify him, least of all the American people if, in the judgement of history, he appears as a Herostratus.

THOMSEN

<sup>5</sup> Col. Fulgencio Batista, Chief of the General Staff of the Constitutional Army of Cuba, 1933-39; Gen. Rafael Trujillo Molina, President of the Dominican Republic, 1930-38; Getulio Vargas, President of Brazil, 1930-45.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 22, footnote 2.

## No. 108

52/34600-01

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 21

BERLIN, March 27, 1939.

#### CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND LIPSKI, THE POLISH AMBASSADOR IN BERLIN, ON MARCH 27, 1939

The Foreign Minister requested the Polish Ambassador to explain the outrages in Bromberg<sup>1</sup> and remarked that these new excesses had created a disastrous impression in Germany, as the suggestion here was that they were being to some extent condoned by the Polish authorities.

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 27 the German press carried reports of anti-German demonstrations at Bromberg, including accounts of the beating and maltreatment of German women and children.

Once again it had been the Western League [*Westverband*],<sup>2</sup> about which Germany had so often addressed complaints to Poland. In Germany it was thought that if the Polish Government were well disposed, they must surely be in a position to prevent such clashes. The Foreign Minister most deeply deplored such a development in German-Polish relations and emphasized that the German Government must hold the Polish Government fully responsible for such occurrences.

The Polish Ambassador stated that he had no knowledge of the incidents mentioned, but promised to make immediate enquiries. He, too, deplored the excesses, but explained them as being a result of the nervous tension at present prevailing in Poland. He promised, moreover, on his own initiative to do everything possible to obviate the repetition of such incidents.

When the Polish Ambassador asserted that similar incidents directed against Poland had also occurred at functions of German clubs, the Foreign Minister at once answered that, so far, the provocation had always come from the Polish side.

When the Polish Ambassador asked whether a "few words to reassure both peoples" could not be found, the Foreign Minister answered that anything of that kind was not warranted by the situation, as the provocation and press attacks, as stated, had so far come only from the Polish side. If—and this could not be prevented much longer—the German press henceforth replied to the Polish attacks, it would do so thoroughly.

In conclusion, the Foreign Minister remarked that he could no longer understand the Polish Government. An evasive answer had been given to the generous proposal which Germany had made to Poland. In any case, the proposal transmitted yesterday by the Polish Ambassador<sup>3</sup> could not be regarded by the Foreign Minister as a basis for a settlement of the questions at issue. Relations between the two countries were therefore deteriorating sharply.

On taking leave the Polish Ambassador promised that he would do everything in his power to overcome the difficulties.

DR. SCHMIDT  
Minister

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>2</sup> A Polish nationalist organization.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 101.

## No. 109

2561/524066

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 269

BERLIN, March 27, 1939.

I spoke to the Swiss Minister today about press reports, according to which Paris and London had apparently been in touch with Berne in

order to prepare for a Franco-British agreement regarding the protection of Swiss neutrality.<sup>1</sup> If it was true that Berne had been approached on this matter, Switzerland would thereby expose herself to the suspicion of being biased in her policy.

Herr Froelicher denied having any news from Berne, but remarked that Switzerland could not prevent an agreement by third parties to regard a violation of Swiss neutrality as a *casus belli*. In point of fact, Switzerland would defend her neutrality herself and would not allow anyone to come to her aid in this matter except at her direct request.

I replied to the Minister by saying that I would still advise him to make enquiries of his Government and to let us know what the position was regarding the alleged, even though merely semi-official, contacts of the French and British Governments with Berne on this matter. What had happened there would come to light anyway.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 93, footnote 2.

## No. 110

2104/455763

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 276

BERLIN, March 27, 1939.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires asked me today whether Bulgaria was not somewhat disturbed about our economic Treaty with Rumania.<sup>1</sup>

I replied to Count Magistrati that both the Bulgarian and the Hungarian Ministers had asked me whether the economic Treaty was linked to any political agreements, and that I had categorically denied the suggestion.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 78.

## No. 111

2204/565938-39

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IV b<sup>1</sup>*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 27, 1939.

e.o. Pol. IV 2160.

The following may be said regarding the Hungarian-Slovak incident on the eastern frontier of Slovakia:

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum was in reply to an enquiry from Ribbentrop which Sonnleithner transmitted to Altenburg in a minute of Mar. 25 (not printed, 7490/E540474).

On the morning of March 23 certain Hungarian detachments, advancing from the south and east, entered Eastern Slovakia from three directions:

- a) From Kapušany through Pavlovce in the direction of Michalovce.
- b) From Ungvár in the direction of Sobrance.
- c) From Berezny in the direction of Ubla-Svina.

From the outset the advance seems to have met with strong resistance from the Slovaks and came to a complete standstill in the evening of March 24. The line of demarcation occupied by the Hungarians at the end of the encounters would probably be, apart from minor deviations, about 10 to 15 kilometres inside Slovakia, to the west of the administrative boundary which, under the old régime, separated that country from Carpatho-Ukraine. About 100-150 persons were killed during the clashes and roughly twice that number wounded. It is to be regretted that, as late as the afternoon of the 24th, the Hungarian Air Force carried out a bombing attack on the airfield at the *volks-deutsch* settlement at Zipser Neudorf, thereby causing the death of a number of civilians.

Following the outbreak of hostilities, Count Csáky had proposed negotiations to the Slovak Government on the question of determining the eastern frontier between Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine. After some hesitation, the proposal was accepted by the Slovak Government. Delegates from both sides met in Budapest for initial talks on Monday March 27 at 12 noon.

Upon news of the clashes becoming known, the efforts of the Foreign Ministry were directed towards the cessation of hostilities and towards persuading both opponents to settle their differences about the line of the frontier at the conference table. Much pressure had to be brought to bear on the Slovaks before the desired result was achieved.

Submitted to the Foreign Minister as instructed.

A[LTENBURG]

## No. 112

1625/388425-27

*Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep*

zu Pol. II 1008.<sup>1</sup>

### EXTRACT FROM A LETTER OF MARCH 27, 1939

I am trying to find out something about the attitude of the Soviet Government towards the British enquiry concerning the anti-aggres-

<sup>1</sup> This is a cover note of Mar. 29 (not printed, 1625/388424) signed by Schliep circulating the above extract to various members of the Foreign Ministry. The full text of the letter has not been found.

sion declaration. It is difficult to find out anything here, as the negotiations are taking place in London. Nevertheless, it can be said with some measure of certainty that, in the first instance, the Soviet Government had replied to the British suggestion with a proposal for a conference,<sup>2</sup> and had then agreed to the Declaration suggested by Britain on condition that Poland should also accede and that the Declaration should not be purely platonic. Confirmation of this last point was however not obtainable. It is not impossible that, in addition, certain requests regarding support from Britain, in the event of a Soviet-Japanese conflict, were mentioned. A Secretary of Legation at the British Embassy here dropped a remark to the effect that the Russians had subscribed to the declaration, but not in the way the British had wanted. In this connection a Soviet Note is reported to have been delivered in London on March 23; another version says it was handed in here.<sup>3</sup> A communiqué promised by the Soviets has significantly not been forthcoming. An effort by Hudson to conduct a political conversation with Litvinov is said to have failed in the early stages.<sup>4</sup> In judging present Soviet foreign policy, two facts must not be lost sight of: for one thing, unusual mistrust prevails here as to the real intentions of the Western Powers towards the Soviet Union. The Soviets suspect the Western Powers of trying to divert German aggression towards Soviet Russia in order to rid themselves of this danger. What is more, the Soviets wish to join the Concert of Europe and desire also a development which would preferably bring about war between Germany, France and Britain, while they themselves can, to begin with, preserve freedom of action and further their own interests. This picture tallies also with Stalin's doctrine on the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, expounded on the occasion of the recent Party Congress.<sup>5</sup> Should I hear any further details today or tomorrow, which is unlikely, I shall report by telegram. Meanwhile, I request that the above be considered as a substitute for a report.

For the rest, the mood in the diplomatic corps towards us Germans has of late become very reserved. We are endeavouring to counteract this. For the present this results in a deterioration of our opportunities of gaining information. This is regrettable, because, in consequence of the well-known conditions here, it is in any case difficult enough to get information.

The Japanese Ambassador told me that Litvinov had, for the first time, at the last conversation on the fisheries question, shown willingness to make concessions. Accordingly, Mr. Togo viewed the matter

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 75, and enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> A Note was handed to the British Ambassador in Moscow by Litvinov on Mar. 22. See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. rv, No. 490.

<sup>4</sup> For Hudson's accounts of his talks with Litvinov see *ibid.*, Nos. 505, 519, 531, 533 and 545.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 1.

somewhat more hopefully. My personal opinion is that Litvinov's changed attitude is due to Togo's having at last begun to make practical suggestions. Apart from this, we have received confidential information from Japanese military sources to the effect that units of the Japanese Navy are being sent north to escort the Japanese fishing fleet when it sails on April 10. Incidentally, there was a further conversation between Togo and Litvinov yesterday and yet another is said to be arranged for tomorrow. It looks as if an understanding were not far off.

This morning a Secretary of Legation from the Japanese Embassy here called on me. In the course of the conversation, he enquired whether we were aware that Britain was making all possible preparations for war with Germany. He added, while asking that it be treated confidentially, that he had information that Britain was withdrawing the British contingents of troops from Hong Kong and Shanghai and transferring them to Singapore, as Britain no doubt assumed that Japan would support Germany. What might this Japanese have had in mind in giving me this information?? Does he want to incite us?! Or to warn us?!

### No. 113

2981/584305-307

*Consul General Wiedemann to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

SAN FRANCISCO, March 27, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I hope you do not mind if I make a personal report to you now and then, and I leave it to you to submit to the Minister what you think fit. Needless to say, I expect no answer as I know how busy you are. I feel very much at home here, and did find conditions much better than I had expected. The general attitude of the American Government and of the American people towards Germany and the recent events is well known. There exists, however, a good deal of understanding and receptiveness for our point of view, and this undoubtedly holds true more in the West than in the East. I entirely agree with those who know America well when they say that only from the West, and, perhaps, from the South, can the population of the United States be influenced in favour of Germany. In the East the Jews govern, so there is nothing to be done there.

My immediate intention is to make as many contacts as possible with authoritative circles and, if possible, gain admittance to them, without at first attempting to engage in any political discussions. Having once got a bit closer together, the other side are bound, of their own accord, to raise the question: What do you think of the political situation? Naturally, I cannot quite avoid an answer. The explanation that all that has happened is no more than a partial redressing of



wrongs done to us finds understanding almost everywhere. I have repeatedly told people to imagine that Germany had won the war, and had made of Ireland, against England, what the Entente has made of Czecho-Slovakia against Germany. One American described the matter still more drastically to his compatriots. He showed them the map of Central Europe and pointed out Czecho-Slovakia as a thumb, and the surrounding German territory as a part of the body not to be more closely specified here, and asked his countrymen what they would do if such a thing should happen to them.

The German-American Chamber of Commerce gave an inaugural luncheon in my honour, at which officers of the highest rank as well as a number of important businessmen were present. We Germans were especially gratified by the fact that Mayor Rossi also came, in spite of the fact that there was a luncheon at the same time in honour of La Guardia,<sup>1</sup> who had given a lecture in the Commonwealth Club shortly before. This was a gesture to the German element here which is to be particularly appreciated. Nor have I any complaints about the attitude of the press or of the Communists. When I arrived here, the representative of the Communist newspaper was present as well as other journalists. The newspaper afterwards published a polite article, and on his departure the correspondent himself informed me, in apologetic terms, that the Party would probably have to send a picket on the following Saturday, as that was the manner in which opinions were expressed here. In point of fact, the picket did not appear on that occasion, but only last Saturday, in reply to the Czech events. Worthy of note in this connection was the attitude of the police, who asked the day before if they should arrest the whole lot beforehand and put them in jail, and also the attitude of a right-wing trade union, which rang up and proposed that they should come as well and beat up the Communists. Naturally, I declined both proposals.

A few days ago I was in Los Angeles for a short time, and there, too, I was astounded by the violent anti-Semitism expressed in many circles. The Jews make the same mistakes here that they make everywhere else in the world: When they are in an authoritative position, they employ only those of their own race and throw the others out, and there are not a few of the latter in Los Angeles.

Naturally, here on the West coast the interest of businessmen is focused above all on selling their products. My arrival was regarded as an opportunity to make yet another drive in this direction. As a result of the well-known measures of the American Government<sup>2</sup> there is, of course, nothing to be achieved here for the moment, but we are able to say to the people: You see, we are doing everything we can, it is always only your Government who prevent a successful outcome.

<sup>1</sup> Fiorello La Guardia, Mayor of New York.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 56 and 71.

In short, I would like to tell you once more that I am very happy here and quite optimistic. I am convinced that it will be possible—within the bounds of reason, of course—to make successful progress toward the objectives assigned to me by the Minister. If you, Mr. State Secretary, wish to help me somewhat in my position, I would ask you to see that I obtain all the funds promised me by the Minister and by the Führer. For it is only possible to achieve things here by personal contact, and to this end one must go out oneself and also entertain.

Meanwhile, my kind regards to your wife. I have the honour to be,

Yours sincerely,

FR. WIEDEMANN

### No. 114

583/242051-52

#### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

MOST URGENT

No. 109 of March 28

ROME (QUIR.) March 28, 1939—8 p.m.

Received March 28—10:45 p.m.

For the Foreign Minister.

Ciano asked me to come and see him today in order to communicate the following to me in connection with the passage in yesterday's speech by the Duce<sup>1</sup> in which Mussolini refused to take any kind of initiative:

A few days ago the Duce had received a personal letter from Chamberlain dated March 20,<sup>2</sup> which I was able to look through in the original in Ciano's presence. In it Chamberlain first of all recalls his appeal of September to which Mussolini had responded at once in those critical days, and explains that he is turning to him again on the same matter. Recalling the highly satisfactory course of the January visit to Rome,<sup>3</sup> he reminds the Duce of the question he then asked, whether he, Chamberlain, had any further wishes to discuss. At the time he had referred only to his one great anxiety lest the Führer might have new and far-reaching plans, in view of the vast German rearmament, the reasons for which were inexplicable. Mussolini had assured him then that the Führer desired and needed peace for the development and internal consolidation of the Reich following the expansion of last year. The events of recent weeks now appeared to him in complete

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 26. See Editors' Note on p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this letter see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 448.

<sup>3</sup> Chamberlain and Halifax visited Rome Jan. 11-14. See *ibid.*, vol. iii, No. 500.

contradiction to this. As he had said in his speech of the 17th<sup>4</sup> these events had produced a most profound impression, not only in Britain, but throughout the world, above all because they seemed to prove that the Führer, by incorporating territories settled by non-Germans, contemplated departing from the oft-proclaimed basic lines of his policy. People were wondering whether this action were not the prelude to further similar actions, and whether other territories also were gradually to be brought under German control. If this were so, then such a policy would lead sooner or later, and probably sooner, to a new major conflict. Certainly no one wanted war, but every single State would prefer it to the certain expectation of seeing themselves fall, one after the other, under German domination. He had no desire to interfere in the policy of the Axis, which he still looked upon as something unalterable. He could not, however, reconcile himself to the dominating position of one single Power. What was happening now had justified the gravest doubts. Fresh moves would change these doubts to certainty. In these anxious days, therefore, he begged the Duce to consider whether he could not take action to allay the present tension and do something to restore shattered confidence. The letter closes with the usual courtesy formula written by hand.

According to what Count Ciano told me, Mussolini confined himself at first to a friendly acknowledgment of the letter; he intends, however, to reply in a few days<sup>5</sup> reiterating to Chamberlain in friendly and courteous terms that, although he is still prepared to cooperate for the preservation of peace, any kind of participation or even initiative on Italy's part in this respect would be out of the question until Italy's just claims had met with consideration.

MACKENSEN

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 23 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> In a further telegram, No. 116 of Apr. 3 (375/208905), Mackensen reported: "In the course of today's conversations, reported elsewhere, Ciano let me see a copy of Mussolini's reply to Chamberlain."

<sup>6</sup> The letter, written in Italian, is couched in very polite terms, but does not go beyond these courtesies. The Duce first recapitulates the lengthy [*sic*] contents of Chamberlain's letter and in reply refers to what he has repeatedly and not just recently declared in public about the situation created by developments in Central Europe and about his own fundamental attitude to the problem of 'peace'. With reference to Chamberlain's suggestion that he should do something, he would, however, like to point out again that there could be no question of his taking any steps until Italy's just claims had been recognized." For the text of this letter, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 596.

## No. 115

1818/415192-94

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

PI 8a/3

WARSAW, March 28, 1939.

Received March 29, 1939.

Pol. V 2781.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Bellicose Mood in Poland.

The excitement caused in Poland by the solution of the Czech question has considerably increased since the reincorporation of the Memel territory.<sup>2</sup> Polish political and military circles are obviously of the opinion that at any moment now the Danzig question may become acute and that the danger of a German coup against Danzig hangs overhead. The wildest rumours are current among the population, as for example that clashes have taken place between German and Polish troops in Oderberg, that Minister Beck has been arrested and similar fantastic reports. Of more serious significance is the appearance of a war mentality, which is encouraged by the press, by anti-German public demonstrations—especially in the provinces—which have already led to incidents in many cases, and partly also by semi-official sabre-rattling propaganda. It is widely believed today that war has become inevitable and is imminent.

The practical measures adopted by the Government help to aggravate the existing war-psychosis. In the course of last week the three age-groups of reservists of 1912, 1913 and 1914 were called up; there were also partial call-ups—for specialist formations—of other age-groups, and besides this there has been requisitioning of horses and lorries. Furthermore, the Government have used the present situation as a pretext for issuing an internal State loan for the purpose of expanding the Air Force and anti-aircraft artillery.

A much reproduced article in the military gazette *Polska Zbrojna*, "We are ready", is especially characteristic of the type of official defence propaganda. Among other things, it is there stated that the Poles, in contrast to the Czechs, have no feeling of inferiority *vis-à-vis* the powerful nations of the world. The number of foreign divisions does not frighten Poland, for her own Army, its equipment and the warlike spirit of the Polish people suffice to assure Poland of victory. Numerous other articles which have since appeared daily in the press are infused with the same spirit and couched in the same language.

This self-assurance and over-estimation of their own military strength, as expressed in the press, contains a certain danger in view of the Polish

<sup>1</sup> The document is stamped: "Seen by the Führer, March 30, 1939."

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 80.

national character. That it is not merely a question of press propaganda is shown by a vouched-for statement made by Gluchowski, the Vice Minister for War who, in the course of a serious conversation, stated that the German Wehrmacht was great bluff, for Germany lacked the trained reserves to bring her units up to strength. When asked whether he believed that Poland was really militarily superior to Germany, Gluchowski answered "Why of course."

Characteristic of the mood in political circles was also an anti-German demonstration staged in the last plenary session of the Senate. The first reading of the Polish-Lithuanian Trade Treaty at which Saulys, the Lithuanian Minister, was present in the diplomatic gallery, gave Senator Katelbach the opportunity of assuring Lithuania, in the name of the Senate, that Poland had sympathized very deeply with Lithuania in the great ordeal she had just undergone. The two Ministers present at the session and Count Szembek, Vice Foreign Minister, joined in the "lengthy and tumultuous" applause which this statement called forth.

MOLTKE

## No. 116

2701/547916

*The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

B 993

LONDON, March 28, 1939.

Received March 29.

W VI 1166.

Subject: Economic sanctions against Germany.

With reference to our report B 894 of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

The British Government have now stated unequivocally that they do not intend to intervene in normal German-British trade, as had been demanded from various quarters as "reprisal" for the German measures in Bohemia and Moravia. Various questions in the House of Commons yesterday as to whether an economic boycott and economic sanctions were intended against Germany were answered by a clear "No". On a question by a member as to what the attitude of the British Government would be if Germany introduced economic sanctions, the Under-Secretary, Butler, said that the situation arising then would have to be reviewed by the Government.

The text of the questions and answers in the official debates report,<sup>2</sup> volume 345, No. 73, columns 1688/94.

By order:

Dr. WEBER

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2791/547901-07). In this report Weber, First Secretary at the London Embassy, discussed the possible effects of recent events on Anglo-German economic relations, concluding that the British Government were "clearly hesitating to intervene in normal Anglo-German economic relations without apparent reason".

<sup>2</sup> i.e., *Parl. Deb., H. of C., loc. cit.*

2002/442301-03

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IV b*

BERLIN, March 28, 1939.

zu Pol. IV 2114.<sup>1</sup>

A conversation took place this afternoon in section VI of the General Staff (Colonel Wagner), at which the Foreign Ministry was represented by the following: Consul General von Druffel from Bratislava, Senior Counsellor Altenburg and Secretary of Legation von Nostitz.

Herr von Druffel brought forward for discussion the various complaints of the Slovak Government<sup>2</sup> against actions of the military authorities inside and outside the occupied zone of Slovakia. At the close of the deliberations the following points were established:

- 1) From March 27 inclusive, the German Customs Frontier Protection Force in Slovakia has been withdrawn to the Moravian-Slovak frontier.
- 2) The line of the Waag<sup>3</sup> continues to be the line of military occupation. It is proposed that at a later date its exact course will be determined by a mixed German-Slovak military commission.
- 3) A staff officer will be seconded to the Consulate General by the end of this week, who will establish direct liaison between the Slovak Armed Forces and the OKW.
- 4) The troops to the east of the military occupation line (only single detachments are involved) are to be recalled today by urgent order.
- 5) The Wehrmacht lay claim to the entire war material of the former Czecho-Slovak Army in the occupied zone of Slovakia. The removal must, however, be carried out in an orderly manner (documents to be handed over). Any disputes and legal claims are to be dealt with later and to be cleared up. Raw materials and machinery to remain where they are in the armament factories of the occupied zone.
- 6) There will be no more requisitioning or removal of war material east of the occupied zone. When necessary, special contact will be made with the Slovak Government.
- 7) The question is under consideration of conceding to the Slovak State an armed force of about four divisions, of which two will be mountain divisions. The Führer's decision on this has still to be obtained.
- 8) The *Volksdeutsche* in Slovakia are, should the case arise, to be concentrated in their own formations under their own command. This would involve the formation of about 3 mountain battalions.

ALTENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2002/442296-98); a Slovak *note verbale* dated Mar. 17, which set forth *inter alia*, a number of the complaints referred to in the document here printed.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 95.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "See the Führer's decision as conveyed to us by OKW. According to that, the Waag line is only to remain 'provisionally' [*vorläufig*] (or was it 'until further notice?' [*bis auf weiteres*!]). W[ermann]." See also document No. 99.

## No. 118

52/34605-06

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 54 of March 29

WARSAW, March 29, 1939—3:43 p.m.

Received March 29—6:35 p.m.

For the Foreign Minister.

Foreign Minister Beck summoned me yesterday evening to tell me the following: In the conversation of March 26,<sup>1</sup> the Reich Foreign Minister told Ambassador Lipski that a Polish coup against Danzig would signify a *casus belli*. This communication forced him to state in turn, that if an attempt should be made by Germany to alter the status of the Free City unilaterally, Poland would regard this as a *casus belli*. The same applied if such a breach of the Treaty<sup>2</sup> were to be made by the Danzig Senate. M. Beck added that the Polish Government regretted the exacerbation in relations caused by the German declaration, and that, far from having any aggressive intentions towards Danzig, they still hoped to find through friendly negotiations a solution to the Danzig problem satisfactory to both sides. He asked me to convey this information to the Foreign Minister.

I answered Beck that this exacerbation had been caused, not by us, but solely by the Polish mobilization measures, which were entirely unjustified, and furthermore, given their effects, they were a very dubious step to take. Even now, as a result of the warlike atmosphere thereby created, and aggravated in an irresponsible fashion by press and propaganda, a situation had arisen holding very dangerous possibilities. The serious incidents in Pomerellen were clear proof of this. I drew special attention to the scandalous outrages in Liniewo<sup>3</sup> and reserved the right to refer to this matter again when I had more precise information.

Beck tried to justify the mobilization measures by saying that the claim made precisely at this moment about Danzig, after the events in Czecho-Slovakia and Memel, had had to be interpreted by Poland as a danger signal. There was no cause for anxiety that difficulties might arise in consequence of the measures taken. So far he knew

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 101.

<sup>2</sup> The words "breach of the Treaty" are an error in deciphering. The draft of this telegram in the files of the Warsaw Embassy (7804/E566358-60) has the word "attempt" in place of them.

<sup>3</sup> According to a despatch of Mar. 28 from the German Consul in Toruń (not printed, 3821/548761-63), a meeting of the local National Socialist Party in Liniewo on Mar. 25 was forcibly broken up by a group of Poles who also destroyed all the furnishings of the assembly rooms and tore up a portrait of the Führer and the German flag; on the following night windows in the house of a German subject were smashed.

nothing of the incidents in Liniewo. The Bromberg incident,<sup>4</sup> where moreover the police had intervened energetically, had been the subject of a ministerial conference. The Minister President<sup>5</sup> had thereupon caused the strictest instructions to be sent to all administrative authorities to avoid everything which might give rise to incidents, and especially to ban meetings and processions.

Beck added that he would continue to use his influence to bring about a peaceful solution, but he would not conceal from me his growing impression that we had come to a turning point in German-Polish relations. The decision now rested with Berlin; everything could still be put right. I countered this by recalling the Berchtesgaden talk<sup>6</sup> at which the Führer had given preeminence to maintaining the policy of reconciliation, and I submitted that the present proposals aimed precisely at setting German-Polish relations on a sound and permanent basis, wherein we surely could expect some understanding from the Polish side.

MOLTKE

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 108, footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> Gen. Felician Sławoj-Składkowski, Minister President and Minister of the Interior.

<sup>6</sup> On Jan. 5, 1939. See vol. v of this Series, document No. 119.

## No. 119

6783/E513489

*The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 18 of March 29

THE HAGUE, March 29, 1939—9:15 p.m.

Received March 30—12:20 a.m.

W 472 g.

With reference to my report A667 of February 10.<sup>1</sup>

The Commander-in-Chief of the Netherlands Field Army<sup>2</sup> informs me that Krupp have refused delivery to the Netherlands Army of at least one hundred light field howitzers, 10.5 cm latest model, together with the requisite gunlimbers and ammunition, although Krupp had made a tender and demonstrated the guns here in Holland in the middle of last year. I need not stress the overall importance of this order which will probably go to France in the event of German refusal, and

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6783/E513471). In it Zech reported the intention of the Netherlands Government to buy armaments abroad. A number of firms would be asked to submit tenders, including Krupp, from whom the Commander-in-Chief would like to obtain the guns.

<sup>2</sup> Lt.-Gen. Baron van Voorst tot Voorst.



request that Krupp be prevailed upon to fulfil it. I also request that I be placed in a position to make an explanation to the General of the Field Army who secured the order for Krupp against the pro-French tendencies of the War Ministry.<sup>3</sup>

ZECH

<sup>3</sup> A copy of this telegram was forwarded to the Reichsgruppe Industrie, which in a letter of Apr. 1 (not printed, 6783/E513503-04) expressed the view that the C.-in-C. of the Netherlands Field Army had been misinformed since Krupp were still interested in and endeavouring to obtain the Netherlands order. See also Addendum to this volume.

## No. 120

2006/442953

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation  
in Hungary*

Telegram

No. 100

BERLIN, March 29, 1939—9:20 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. IV 2203.

With reference to your telegram 87 of March 27.<sup>1</sup>

As already orally discussed in Berlin, we do not at present propose to intervene as mediator in the negotiations between the Hungarian and Slovak Governments on the frontier questions. You should evade further discussion of the allegation that the Hungarian invasion of Slovakia occurred with German approval, and contradict it if necessary in conversation by drawing attention to the Hungarian *démenti* already given.

I refer you also to the telephone conversation with the State Secretary on March 28.<sup>2</sup>

WOERMANN<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2006/442956). In this telegram, Erdmannsdorff reported that he had been asked by the State Secretary of the Slovak Foreign Ministry whether the statements of some Hungarian Commanders, that the Hungarian invasion of Slovakia had taken place with German approval, were true.

<sup>2</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 31 (2313/484529) Altenburg recorded: "Minister von Erdmannsdorff telephoned at 5:45 p.m. that Count Csáky had informed him that, with certain legal reservations, the Slovak Delegation accepted this morning the Hungarian demands for establishing the frontier in Eastern Slovakia. The Hungarians are prepared to make certain economic concessions. Technical commissions are to be set up for this as also for delimitation of the new frontier. The latter commission has already started work this afternoon."

## No. 121

1625/388421-22

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 99 of March 29

LONDON, March 29, 1939—11:23 p.m.

Received March 30—2:40 a.m.

Pol. II 983.

With reference to my telegram No. 93 of March 25 (Pol. II 931).<sup>1</sup>

I. Statements made yesterday by Chamberlain in the House of Commons and by Plymouth in the House of Lords,<sup>2</sup> as well as reports in this morning's press, give the state of the negotiations on the question of the British declaration projects<sup>3</sup> approximately as follows:

1) The British Government recognize *de facto* the position created by the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia, as well as of the Memel territory, but will in future oppose any changes by force in the map of Europe. Direct threat of force is put on a par with changes by force. "Aggression" is beginning to emerge in everyday language as synonymous for both.

2) Strengthening of the existing Anglo-French alliance to meet a possible German attack in the west, even if this attack were to be directed against Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and Denmark. In addition, consultations on military assistance in the event of a German attack on Poland or Rumania.

3) Independently of this, endeavours to develop the already existing alliance between Poland and Rumania, so that the two States would come to each other's assistance, not only in the event of a Soviet Russian, but also of a German attack.

4) As a result of the negative attitude of all the States consulted, as well as of the Conservative Opposition, Soviet Russia drops out as a partner. Admission of the Soviets will be considered only after war has already broken out.

5) The Balkan States too, like Russia, are to be held in reserve for the present.

6) The idea of a conference has been abandoned. Instead negotiations are to be carried on through diplomatic channels. Attempts are

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1625/388417-18). In this telegram Kordt reported reasons for believing that the Netherlands had been sounded about, and had reacted unfavourably to, the projected British declaration.

<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 28 Chamberlain stated in the House of Commons, in answer to a question about the European situation, that the Government were "actively continuing their consultations with other Governments upon the issues arising from recent events". In reply to a further question he said that what the Government had in mind "goes a great deal further than consultation". See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, cols. 1883-1885; for Lord Plymouth's speech see *Parl. Deb., H. of L.*, vol. 112, cols. 474-478.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 83.

being made to embody any results in secret agreements, which is however hardly practicable.

7) Introduction of conscription is improbable; instead there will be intensified recruiting for the three branches of the Armed Forces on a voluntary basis and, in particular, expansion of the Territorial Army.

II. The present state of the negotiations seems to rest on the following considerations: The originally planned methods for security against territorial changes through attack or threat of force have found but scant welcome in all the countries concerned. Obviously the countries consulted wish to avoid anything which could be interpreted as an encirclement of Germany. Now Great Britain has adopted this standpoint also. Hence the renunciation of direct Soviet Russian cooperation. It is not considered desirable to drive Germany to desperate measures.

Poland and Rumania are not to be put in a position which must impose a strain on their relations with Germany. This is the reason for the proposed acknowledgement and development of the already existing Polish-Rumanian defensive alliance. The proposed support of Poland by Great Britain and France, in the event of a German attack, is not to be given the character of a real treaty in favour of a third party with a direct Polish claim for assistance, but will rather be in the form of a declaration of willingness by Britain and France without the need for acceptance. The circumstances are similar in the case of Rumania.

III. Two systems of treaties are therefore apparently planned:

- 1) The French-British system for safeguarding the frontier in the west.
- 2) An eastern system of treaties, the nucleus of which would be formed by the Polish-Rumanian alliance.

KORDT

## No. 122

189/82518

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 279

BERLIN, March 29, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister told me today that it is thought in Budapest that the satisfactory and rapid conclusion of our economic Treaty with Rumania appears to be also due to the Hungarian military measures, under the influence of which Bucharest showed itself accommodating towards us. Budapest rejoiced with us over our success.

I laughed at Minister Sztójay, and told him that the Rumanian offers to us in the economic field had been made a good deal earlier than the

Hungarian military measures. I also said that I noted with pleasure that Budapest also welcomed our economic agreement with Rumania in the common interest.

In this conversation it also came to light that Hungary no longer adheres to her intention to make over a few villages in Carpatho-Ukraine to Rumania if Rumania gives her compensation for them elsewhere.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 123

3062/611798

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 280

BERLIN, March 29, 1939.

Referring to his last audience with the Führer,<sup>1</sup> the Hungarian Minister asked me today about our conversations with Poland regarding Danzig. He also hinted that Count Csáky would be prepared for his part to counsel a conciliatory attitude in Warsaw, should we so wish.

I ignored the latter idea as being futile. For the rest, I merely told Sztójay that our conversations with the Poles were still continuing. Certainly Warsaw had so far shown very little understanding. There was still a great deal they must learn.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 96, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]", and: "Thank!"

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Resubmit for next conversation with the Hungarian Minister, or on 4/IV. W[eizsäcker]." A memorandum by Weizsäcker, St.S. No. 309 of Apr. 3 (not printed, 7488/E540466), records that he expressed the Foreign Minister's thanks to the Hungarian Minister.

## No. 124

52/34608-00

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 282

BERLIN, March 29, 1939.

The President of the Danzig Senate, Greiser, and Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher, head of the Foreign Department of the Danzig Senate, called on me today to enquire about the state of the German-Polish discussions on the solution of the Danzig question.

I acquainted the gentlemen—insofar as they were not already informed—with the treatment of this question during the last few months, and in particular with the essential substance of the conversations

of the Reich Foreign Minister with Ambassador Lipski on March 21 and 26.<sup>1</sup>

On being asked by President Greiser what attitude Danzig should adopt in future, I replied that in my opinion Danzig had no cause to show the Polish Government a particularly accommodating attitude in the treatment of Danzig-Polish questions (e.g., students' conflict<sup>2</sup>), but that, on the other hand, I did not consider it advisable to provoke Poland in any way through Danzig. I thought it now possible to conduct a kind of policy of attrition towards Poland in order to make the Polish Government more disposed to the solution we aimed at for certain German-Polish questions, including also the Danzig question. Danzig should continue to behave just as during the last few weeks and months.

President Greiser further asked what attitude Danzig should adopt in future towards Professor Burckhardt, the League of Nations Commissioner in Danzig. I replied that I considered it advisable for Burckhardt not to return to Danzig for the time being as he only ran the danger of being misused by the Polish Diplomatic Representative there for Polish ends and to further the intentions of the Committee of Three.<sup>3</sup> When Greiser asked if he, Greiser, should accept an invitation, if it were issued, from the Committee of Three to go to London, I answered that it would be better if he declined such an invitation, as it was to be feared that he would merely be interrogated by the Committee of Three, treated disrespectfully and then dismissed.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 61 and 101.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 131.

<sup>3</sup> The Committee of Three, composed of representatives of Great Britain, France and Sweden, was an organ of the League Council set up on July 4, 1936. Its purpose was to give preliminary consideration to, and thus relieve the Council's agenda of, the numerous Danzig issues referred to the League by the High Commissioner. See also vol. v of this Series, chapter I.

## No. 125

1522/373334-36

*The Ministry of the Interior to the Head of the Reich Chancellery*

VI b 701 X/39  
8300

BERLIN, March 29, 1939.

Subject: German-Polish Governmental negotiations on questions concerning national groups.

I enclose copies of the memorandum on the German-Polish negotiations<sup>1</sup> for your information.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1522/373337-59). The minutes of the discussions held Feb. 27-Mar. 3, 1939. There are seven appendices containing the agenda, German and Polish proposals on specific items and draft press communiqués.

I would like to make a few general remarks on the negotiations conducted with the representatives of the Polish Government:

The negotiations have given the following clear picture:

The Poles have no intention of making any change in their policy towards the German national group. In less important spheres they may be prepared to make small concessions, but in matters affecting the life of the German national group they are determined to pursue with vigour their present de-Germanizing policy. The following two fundamental considerations on the part of the Polish delegation ran like a scarlet thread through the discussions:—

a) During the one and a half centuries of Prussian administration, a definite percentage of the former Polish population has been Germanized. The Polish Government regard it as their duty to bring this section of the population back into the Polish national community.

b) The German national group, though it still only amounts to two per cent of the total Polish population, nevertheless possesses such a strong economic and cultural structure that it is able to exert a not inconsiderable influence on sections of the Polish national community which lack stability. Therefore the German community must be reduced to a degree of insignificance commensurate with its numerical strength.

Regarding (a) I replied to the Polish delegation as follows: The Germans did not first come into the country during the period of Prussian rule. On the contrary, there had for centuries been a considerable proportion of German settlers in the districts which fell to Prussia in 1772 and 1793. Thus the Germans did not come to Poland as conquerors, but were invited into the country by the Polish kings and nobles. In all spheres of cultural and economic life they have worked constructively in every way, so that they have acquired a number of privileges. This, I explained, is perhaps the underlying reason for the strong, centuries-old antipathy shown towards the German community by the Polish people, to whom the Germans were held up as examples by the Polish ruling classes of the time. Today the Germans demand no privileges, but only that their most elementary right to live should be respected.

Concerning the fundamental idea in (b), I asked the Polish delegation how the Polish Government, in view of this consideration, envisaged the carrying out of the Minorities Declaration of November 5, 1937,<sup>2</sup> according to which any discrimination against the German national group was to be ruled out.

In reply to this the Polish delegation could only state that all measures are kept strictly within the laws made by the democracy of

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 18.

Poland, and are applicable to everyone. This basic view, in my opinion, provides the key to the Polish attitude towards the German community, that is, a frantic endeavour to appear as a great Power united in a single national State, combined with an inferiority complex.

Concerning the position of the Polish national community in Germany, the Polish delegation pointed out that the National Socialist ideology is unfavourable soil for the prospects of a foreign minority in Germany. The object of all laws, as indeed the laws themselves openly declared, was the welfare of the German people. The dynamic force of National Socialism, permeating as it did the entire German nation, was so strong that no room was left for individual life to the Polish national group.

The following conclusion can accordingly be drawn:

The Polish Government, on the basis of their "democratic" laws, arrogate to themselves the right to torment and persecute the German community, and deprive them of their rights, while at the same time demanding privileges for the Polish national group in Germany. In view of this basic attitude no constructive results could be achieved in the discussions.

By order:  
DR. VOLLERT

## No. 126

2908/566006-67

*Senior Counsellor Schliep to Ambassador Moltke*

BERLIN, March 29, 1939.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR: I beg to submit herewith Prince Bismarck's memorandum<sup>1</sup> on his conversation today with Prince Lubomirski.<sup>2</sup>

Herr Greiser was received this evening by the State Secretary<sup>3</sup> and the Foreign Minister.<sup>4</sup> On being asked by the President of the Senate what attitude Danzig should adopt, Herr von Weizsäcker answered that in his opinion Danzig had no cause to show Poland a particularly accommodating attitude in the treatment of Danzig-Polish affairs; nor did he, on the other hand, consider it advisable to provoke Poland from Danzig in any way. In his opinion Germany would now adopt a kind of attrition tactics towards Poland in order to make the Polish Government more disposed to the settlement aimed at by us for certain German-Polish problems. During this period of attrition Danzig should continue to behave as in the last few weeks and months.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (52/34603-04). Bismarck had protested about the incidents in Liniewo, and elsewhere, which had been reported from Toruń (see document No. 118, footnote 3) and the appeal to boycott the German element launched by several Polish organizations.

<sup>2</sup> Counsellor of the Polish Embassy in Berlin.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 124.

<sup>4</sup> No material on this interview has been found.

The Foreign Minister also spoke on the same lines: Danzig should adopt a Sphinx-like attitude towards Poland. Germany would stick to her demands on Poland and continue to assert them emphatically. Moreover, the Foreign Minister was of the opinion that the climax of the present crisis had already been reached.

Heartiest greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

SCHLIEF

No. 127

2609/525462-64

*Minister Blücher to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

HELSINKI, March 29, 1939.

DEAR BARON VON WEIZSÄCKER: Knowing how fully occupied your time is, I do not usually trouble you with private letters. Today I would like to make an exception in connection with the Aaland question.<sup>1</sup>

You know that, with the exception of Germany and Italy, all the signatory Powers have replied to the Finnish-Swedish Note<sup>2</sup> weeks ago. Now the non-arrival of our reply is extremely awkward for the Finnish Government, and especially for the Finnish Foreign Minister, because the elections are due to take place on July 1, and by then the matter must have passed through the tedious parliamentary channels common to every democratic country. At every meeting with me the Foreign Minister refers to the non-arrival of the German reply, and anything that I can say in reply is but poor consolation.

At the same time the Foreign Minister is fully prepared for Germany to make a reservation regarding the special Swedish rights and about bringing in the League of Nations. I have the impression that this reservation is not so awkward for him as the fact that we have been keeping him waiting for weeks, especially as there are circles inside and outside the Government who regard the non-arrival of the German reply as a slight to a small State, or who even suspect Machiavellian designs behind it.

In these days when Britain is courting Poland and Russia, and when Mr. Hudson is expected here,<sup>3</sup> the Finnish attitude is not without significance in the process of a possible regrouping of the Powers, at least in Northern Europe. In this respect too, it would serve our interests not to keep the Finns waiting any longer.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 145 and also vol. v of this Series, chapter IV.

<sup>2</sup> See the League of Nations, *Official Journal*, May-June, 1939, pp. 279-282, and vol. v of this Series, document No. 464.

<sup>3</sup> R. S. Hudson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, arrived at Helsinki for trade talks on Mar. 29. This visit was part of a tour which had already taken him to Warsaw and Moscow.



In particular, I would like the Foreign Minister, for his own sake, to be able soon to present his Cabinet with the German reply. In these critical days, M. Erkkö has clearly dissociated himself from Russia and, in a certain sense, from Britain also, and because of this, has had to overcome much opposition among his Cabinet colleagues. Continued non-arrival of the German reply is bound to weaken his position in the Cabinet, and that runs counter to our interests.

In conclusion, therefore, I would like to urge that the reply to the Aaland note be speeded up as much as possible.<sup>4</sup>

I kiss the Baroness's hand and send kind regards to yourself.

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

BLÜCHER

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "1. Foreign Minister has been informed. 2. Today I promised the Swedish Minister an early opportunity for a discussion. 3. Blücher has to be put off for another brief period. Herewith to the Under State Secretary, W[eizsäcker] 4. [4]."

## No. 128

5570/E399823-24

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 78 of March 30

BELGRADE, March 30, 1939—8:50 p.m.

Received March 31—1:50 a.m.

W 474 g.

With reference to my telegram No. 74 relating to the arms transaction.<sup>1</sup>

I. On instructions from the Ministry of War, Colonel Bosanović informed Military Attaché von Faber officially yesterday that the progress of the negotiations for the armaments transaction was causing grave concern. The tender for anti-aircraft guns submitted by the firm of Krupp could just not be discussed in view of the prices quoted. The prices were several times higher than those asked by competitors. The Ministry of War still wishes to conclude a deal with Germany as soon as possible. However, a prior condition was of course the quotation of prices which were in some degree acceptable. He was urgently requesting the Military Attaché also himself to bring influence to bear, in order that the conclusion of a big armaments deal should not be endangered by private firms demanding impossible prices.

II. Simović, the Chief of the General Staff, who had asked Air Attaché von Schönebeck to call on him this morning, expressed on behalf of the Ministry of War similar concern regarding the progress of negotiations for the delivery of aircraft. The submission of tenders

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 105.

from the aircraft firms, urgently requested and long promised, was repeatedly being delayed for some obscure reason. These tenders formed, however, the indispensable basis for any negotiations, since it could only be seen from them whether the prices quoted came at all within the range of what was feasible for Yugoslavia. Since the Field Marshal had approved in principle the conclusion of big arms transactions on a credit basis, the difficulties which were suddenly cropping up were not understood here. On the other hand, the smooth conclusion of the transaction would greatly enhance Germany's prestige with the army and the public.

III. Consul General Neuhausen has been advised of the foregoing. As he has just informed me he has, in consultation with Ministerialdirektor Wiehl by telephone, cleared up the question of the ban on tenders from aircraft firms to the effect that the tender may be submitted subject to a proviso regarding agreement being reached on the question of credit.

IV. Like the Military and Air Attachés, I too have the impression that the Yugoslav Ministry of War attaches the greatest importance to speedy rearmament and urgently needs our assistance for this, with the result that the exploitation of this difficult situation by the quoting of exorbitant prices may cause serious and lasting resentment to the detriment of the good name of German industry.

HEEREN

## No. 129

2767/535837

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 292

BERLIN, March 30, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. II 1049.

The Swiss Minister<sup>1</sup> told me today, in continuation of our recent conversation,<sup>2</sup> that the Swiss Government were not involved either officially or semi-officially in the discussions which were taking place now between Britain and France with a view to cooperating for the protection of Switzerland, Belgium and Holland. Switzerland knew no more of these matters than what she had learnt from the press. She regarded what was going on between London and Paris as *res inter alios acta*.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Hans Frölicher.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 109.

## No. 130

B21/005028-29

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, March 30, 1939.

ECONOMIC TENSION WITH THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
CAUSED BY THE INCORPORATION OF THE PROTECTORATE OF  
BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA1) *American measures.*<sup>1</sup>

The American Government immediately withdrew most-favoured treatment from goods from the Protectorate and placed them on a par with goods from the Reich proper [*Altreich*]. They have further directed that, as from April 22, an additional duty of 25 per cent is to be imposed on all dutiable goods from the Reich proper, the Protectorate and Memel. These measures against the Reich proper have long been recommended by certain circles in America and also by some government offices. Their introduction at the present moment may be considered merely as a political gesture of disapproval.

2) *Effects of the measures.*

Through the withdrawal of most-favoured treatment, the sale of goods from the Protectorate in the USA is rendered very difficult. As a result of the additional duty, the Greater Reich's export to the USA, hitherto worth 200 million RM, will probably be cut by approximately 85 million RM. With this export of 85 million RM, we have hitherto paid for the import of important raw materials (cotton and copper) for which, if we must still obtain them from the United States, foreign exchange will have to be expended.

3) *Possible counter-measures.*

The following might be considered:

(a) Immediate and complete cessation of purchases of cotton in order to strike the United States at this sensitive spot in its economic and domestic policy.<sup>2</sup> However, German economy would also be harmed by this action, as long as we did not succeed in transferring our orders for cotton to other countries, a transfer which would probably be difficult. The desired effect on the USA is lessened by the fact that the American Government have already introduced measures to ease the political pressure at home by subsidizing their exports of cotton. A decrease in our supplies of cotton from the USA will result from the

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 14, 33, 56, 71 and 104.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 24.

actual situation, even though it is ordered and announced as a counter-measure.

(b) Imposition of the maximum German tariff on imports from America.

(c) Complete cessation of payments to USA on German debts.

All these measures, especially those specified under (b) and (c), would certainly provoke further American measures. First of all, penalty duties would be imposed, as a result of which there would be a complete cessation of German exports to the USA; further, also, measures [would be taken] against German property and German balances in the USA as well as against German shipping, as a result of which trade between Germany and other countries would be seriously affected (cf. previous memorandum of December 19, 1938).<sup>3</sup>

4) The freezing of Czech credit balances (State and private) in American banks, originally ordered, has meanwhile been rescinded. American creditors with balances in the Protectorate are, through the German foreign currency control introduced there, restricted in their use of these credits without the need having arisen to institute special freezing measures. The Protectorate's public and private debts to the USA amount to approximately 28 million dollars, and the gold and foreign currency credit of the former Czech Government with the Federal Reserve Bank in New York amounts to approximately the same, so that for this reason, too, a special order blocking American claims against the Protectorate cannot be recommended.

5) *Further procedure.*

Definite German counter measures are not contemplated. Where restrictions are possible (cotton) they will be made "unobtrusively" [*auf kaltem Wege*]. The attempt will be made to obtain as much as possible from the German-American exchange of commodities. It is hoped to induce the United States Government to cancel the additional duties by dropping the German measures for promotion of exports which were the reason given for these additional duties.

WIEHL

<sup>3</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 514.

## No. 131

160/82534-45

*Ministerialdirektor Wohllhat to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

W VI/373

BERLIN, March 30, 1939.

DEAR STATE SECRETARY: I transmit herewith for your confidential information a copy of my report to the Field Marshal on the negotiations in Bucharest.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i.e., for the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty (document No. 78).

I have submitted the matter to the Foreign Minister. Ministerialdirektor Wiehl has also been informed.<sup>2</sup> I promised [Under] State Secretary Woermann that I would forward this report, and I would be grateful if you would acquaint him with it.

Heil Hitler!

Yours faithfully,

WOHLTHAT

<sup>2</sup> Wohlthat also submitted a memorandum (not printed, 2104/455751-59), entitled "Survey of the first economic effects of the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty", to Wiehl on the same date.

[Enclosure]

W VI/313

BERLIN, March 27, 1939.

REPORT ON MY NEGOTIATIONS IN BUCHAREST OF  
MARCH 10-23, 1939

Submitted to Field Marshal Göring for his information.

My departure from Berlin was delayed several days as the Foreign Minister's report, in which recommendations were to have been made for the treatment of the Antarctic discoveries<sup>3</sup> and for instructions for negotiations with Rumania, was only made on March 9. State Secretary Weizsäcker being agreeable, I set off on March 8. On my arrival in Bucharest on March 10, I could see how important it was that my journey had not been further delayed. Political circles in Bucharest had reckoned with a Cabinet reshuffle if the German Government had not empowered me to conclude a treaty, or had put off the negotiations. The Ministers who would have been replaced because their pro-German policy, which had been sanctioned by the King, had proved unsuccessful, were: Gafencu, the Foreign Minister; Bujoiu, the Minister of Economics and Slavescu, the Minister for Armaments.

Gafencu had informed the British that, as long as Rumania was negotiating with Germany, they should make their proposals in writing, and for the time being send no economic delegation to Bucharest. I had agreed on this with Gafencu when I left at the end of February. Bujoiu had been charged with the direction of the negotiations by the King after he had obtained His Majesty's approval for his economic policy after arguments with Constantinescu, the Finance Minister and Governor of the National Bank, in two ministerial conferences under the King's chairmanship. Slavescu had, as Minister for Armaments, energetically advocated a policy of cooperation with Germany; I had also convinced him of the better prospects of supplies from Germany under the collective plan, compared with supplies from France and Britain.

<sup>3</sup> This may possibly be a reference to the German Antarctic expedition, 1938-39.

Gafencu asked me immediately on my arrival what political news I had for the King as he needed the support of the King *vis-à-vis* the other Ministers in order to push the treaty through the Cabinet. In addition to bringing the actual terms of the treaty to his notice, I endeavoured to bring home to him the immense political value of the German proposal which was that, instead of a secret agreement, an official State treaty should be concluded, for which the German Reich Chancellor on the one side and the King of Rumania on the other side would appoint their plenipotentiaries. As instructed, I did not go into the matter of the decoration,<sup>4</sup> the personnel questions and Gafencu's visit to Berlin.

The King had given instructions that the conversations were only to be conducted by his Ministers. This led to loss of time as, after I had convinced Bujoiu, the Minister for Economics, he had to keep reporting to the Cabinet, which was meeting under the chairmanship of the King.

After the first news of the events in Slovakia and Prague, political tension developed and continued to mount daily until the signature of the treaty on March 23. On March 15 and 16, I was able to report that Gafencu, the Foreign Minister, was in agreement with the form of the treaty and that the King agreed in principle to the draft treaty drawn up with Bujoiu, the Minister of Economics.

A three hour meeting of the Cabinet and Privy Councillors took place under the chairmanship of the King during the late afternoon of March 17. At this meeting Rumanian policy was laid down in respect of the events in Czecho-Slovakia and the Hungarian invasion of Carpatho-Ukraine, the attuning of Rumania's policy with that of her allies, Poland and Yugoslavia, the attitude to be taken in the Balkan Entente and the Little Entente and the economic treaty with Germany. The Cabinet clearly saw that far more than a commercial treaty in the usual sense was involved.

Since my arrival, British and French journalists had appeared in steadily increasing numbers. The foreign diplomats, particularly the British, daily pressed the Rumanian Ministers for information on the

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 261, footnote 2. The Wiehl telegram of Dec. 5 (2104/455845), there quoted, also includes the following passage: "In view of recent political events in Rumania, it has been decided to drop the plan to confer a decoration on the Crown Prince." In a letter of Mar. 16 to Wiehl (not printed, 2104/455796-97) Gramsch, an official of the Four Year Plan, quoted the following passage from a letter from Wohlthat: "I have learned from the Minister here that the prospects in the matter of the decorations, which the King feels as a personal insult to himself, are extremely doubtful, as the suggestion for this action is supposed to have been made to the Führer by Herr v. R[ibbentrop] himself. Consequently there is no one in the Ministry who will make a reasonable proposal in the matter . . ." In telegram No. 90 of Mar. 17 (not printed, 169/82503) Fabricius reported that the Minister of the Court had realized that they would have to let bygones be bygones. Telegram No. 105 of Mar. 22 (8920/E823219) from Ribbentrop to Fabricius read: "After hearing my report the Führer has agreed to the settlement of the decorations question after the conclusion of the Economic Treaty. You may act on this should any importance still be attached [by the Rumanians] to a settlement of the matter."

state of the negotiations with Germany. On Saturday, March 18, *The Times* and the BBC London reported a German economic ultimatum to Rumania. When the news reached Bucharest, I was holding a discussion with Bujoiu, the Minister for Economics, on the text of the treaty, the signature of which I wished to effect on Monday, March 20, if possible, in view of the threatening situation. Titeanu, the Rumanian State Secretary for Propaganda, called on us at once at the Ministry for Economic Affairs, and loyally discussed an official *démenti* which the Rumanian Government proposed of their own accord and in which the friendly character of our negotiations was to be emphasized. For his part, Gafencu immediately telephoned Ambassador Tatarescu in Paris and instructed him to make public Bucharest's *démenti*. Gafencu similarly telephoned Tilea, Minister in London, who, it is true, did not communicate the *démenti* officially to the British press. At that time the Rumanians considered Reuter's Bucharest representative to be the guilty person. It transpired during the course of the day that the Western Powers were bringing unusual pressure to bear on Rumania in order to prevent the conclusion of a treaty with Germany.

I was forced to infer from these events that the conclusion of a secret treaty was no longer possible, and I changed the texts into that of a State treaty which could, if necessary, be published, and a Secret Protocol of Signature incorporating the objects and reciprocal promises of the two Governments, which were not suitable for publication. In spite of the fact that I completed the new texts with M. Bujoiu during the night from Saturday to Sunday, signature could not take place on Monday, as M. Bujoiu could, in the tense political situation, no longer obtain the approval of the other Ministers. On Tuesday, March 21, I negotiated for nine consecutive hours with M. Bujoiu and thought that I had reached agreement with him by one o'clock in the morning. As it further transpired at midday, Wednesday, March 22, that the Cabinet, with the King as chairman, was still discussing the treaty, I called on Foreign Minister Gafencu together with Minister Fabricius at five in the afternoon, and pointed out to him the risk Rumania was running by a further delay in signature. I stated that I would leave for Berlin during the evening of Thursday, March 23, and I requested direct negotiations in which the Foreign Minister himself should take part, or immediate audience of the King. I was obliged to take this decisive step as a critical situation had developed in the excitable southern atmosphere, under the influence of world publicity and the mobilization in Bucharest. The rural population called to the colours appeared in masses in Bucharest and other towns. There was a partial breakdown in transport. Millions of Lei were withdrawn from the banks. The population listened in to the radio announcements from London and Paris. The leading political circles were convinced that an invasion from Hungary threatened Transylvania, and that one from Bulgaria

threatened the Dobruja. It was said that the Russians were concentrating forces on the Bessarabian frontier. The view was held that either Germany must restrain Hungary and Bulgaria, or that Britain and France must guarantee the Rumanian frontiers.

The question of whether the German-Rumanian treaty was signed or not had, as a result of Britain's policy, become of decisive importance for Germany's position in South East Europe. Quite apart from the fundamentally new trade policy adopted by us Germans under the treaty, I was able to bring about the following political consequences by concluding it:

1. The Rumanian people would be released by Germany from the nightmare of mobilization and the threat to their frontiers.

2. The mobilization led to the entire people becoming conscious that their future depended on the treaty and on cooperation with Germany.

3. Germany successfully asserted herself in Rumanian eyes in an open trial of strength with Britain.

4. All South East European countries were compelled to see who possessed the ascendancy on the Danube, supported by economic realities: Germany with her modern forms of treaty, or Britain and France with old claims and propaganda.

5. It was possible to inflict a decisive defeat in the European political sphere on the British and French during Lebrun's State visit to London<sup>5</sup> when Rumania, the greatest and richest country of South East Europe, voluntarily concluded with Germany, in spite of all attacks, the most important economic treaty in all her history.

The decisive negotiations began at seven o'clock in the evening at Minister Bujoiu's home. Gafencu was present. Shortly before, Minister Fabricius had received a communication by telephone from the Foreign Ministry in Berlin that they would attach the greatest importance to signature during that very night. When it transpired that the Rumanians were not agreed on three important points because they feared for their sovereignty, I took such a strong line that Calinescu, the Minister President, was brought in. Gafencu wished to have expression given in the text of the treaty to a peace policy. I declared that a grand economic policy could only be effected in peacetime. He insisted on his wish and then accepted my proposal to insert in the preamble the words: "in pursuance of their peaceful aims". Calinescu proved to be an outstanding jurist, but one who could not reply to economic and financial arguments. From the King's appearance, I concluded that he, too, regarded the prompt conclusion of the treaty as necessary. As he only put forward political arguments, I saw an opportunity to push through all the German demands, made no further concessions in the

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 84, footnote 2.



matter and only altered the wording. Calinescu resisted industrial cooperation on a mixed industrial committee as the Rumanians feared Germany would deny them self-determination in their industrialization.

The Rumanians further asked for a State credit of 200-250 million RM and quoted to me as example the German credit loans granted to Yugoslavia, Poland and Turkey. I declined, and it remained a matter of private credit. Finally, Bujoiu, who certainly did not speak from his own conviction but was urged on by Constantinescu, the Finance Minister, advocated various restrictive provisions in the matter of financing and capital investments. Calinescu then left the meeting for a time in order to obtain the consent of the other Ministers and the King. The texts were completed by 4 a.m., after adoption of the German wishes. Signature was, indeed, no longer possible during that night but, at the earliest, at midday on Thursday, March 23, after a fair copy had been completed and the Rumanian texts had been translated. Even though there was a certain risk in the delay of signature, this was offset by the material advantages obtained under the treaty. If there was no alteration in the political situation, the effect of the signature on Britain and France would still be the same on Thursday, at the end of Lebrun's State visit. Incidentally, the Rumanians considered Italian opposition to the German policy to be particularly disturbing.

At midday on Thursday, Minister Bujoiu asked me to call on him, as the Rumanians wished to have four points amended before signature. It transpired that, in particular, the question of how Yugoslavia was to receive the State credits had been raised. I refused orally to reopen negotiations, and only agreed to one point where the Rumanians had erred in favour of Germany, the phrase "as well as" being replaced by the word "or".

The signature took place in the Foreign Ministry at 5:30 in the afternoon. Gafencu concluded his address with the hope that Germany would, as a result of the treaty, gain a similar position to the one she had enjoyed in Rumania before 1914.

From the Foreign Ministry I drove straight to the audience in the palace. The King was very satisfied with the terms of the treaty and with its signature at this moment. He expected a general feeling of relief from the news of the signature which, in fact, was spreading like wildfire among the population, who were in a state of extreme tension as a result of the mobilization. The King mentioned that relations between the two countries were, however, not yet satisfactory on all counts. On the basis of communications from the Foreign Ministry, I could now hold out the prospect of Gafencu, the Rumanian Foreign Minister, being invited to Berlin. In general terms, I also spoke somewhat optimistically of the further questions, as Minister Fabricius had received a communication by telephone from the Foreign Ministry

from which it appeared that the matter of the decorations would also be settled. When the King asked what repercussions the linking of Rumania's national economy with that of Germany would produce in the sphere of foreign exchange policy, I explained to him the possible solution for a future settlement of inter-State liabilities in Europe. The King believed that, with the present trend of British policy, these questions could not be broached. The conversation took a markedly polite course. When the audience ended, the square before the palace was filled with an excited crowd of people. American and British journalists asked me as I left the palace whether signature had taken place. The Americans had wagered with the British that I would succeed in concluding the treaty.

Rightly or wrongly, it was felt among the Rumanian people that peace had been assured by the conclusion of the treaty. At my departure from the station, which was surrounded by thousands of peasants called to the colours, uniformed police officials were standing in readiness to accompany the sleeping-car to the frontier, so as to prevent its being stormed by troops or peasants, or even attacked by Jews, who made no secret of their rage.

The following concomitants of the negotiations should also be emphasized. Tilea, the Rumanian Minister in London, was immediately summoned home in spite of the fact that he is a friend of Gafencu and Tatarescu. He was not allowed to take part in the ceremonies of the State visit, and is said to have been recalled. Auşnit,<sup>6</sup> the Jewish industrial magnate, with his offers of large credits for an Anglo-French syndicate, met with a refusal from the Rumanians, as I convinced the latter that Auşnit and his friends wished to take their capital out of Rumania in this way. Kaufmann, the leading Jewish banker, and owner of the Banque de Crédit, with whom negotiations had already been conducted for some weeks, sold the shares needed for a 51 per cent majority to a Rumanian syndicate of which, among other people, the Queen of Greece is a member, and gave the syndicate's brokers a firm option on the rest of his holdings. By this means, Jewish influence was successfully eliminated from this bank. The Deutsche Bank of Berlin is to be a member of the pool which will control the bank.

On my return I gave State Secretary Körner<sup>7</sup> a brief account, and will report to the Foreign Minister this afternoon.

WOHLTHAT

<sup>6</sup> General manager of the Reşita iron-works and director of many large Rumanian industrial undertakings.

<sup>7</sup> Permanent Deputy to Göring as Commissioner for the Four Year Plan.

## No. 132

1975/436349-50

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Hungary*

Telegram

No. 103

BERLIN, March 30, 1939.

Sent March 31—2:15 a.m.

zu Pol. IV 2206 Ang. I.<sup>1</sup>zu Pol. IV 2213.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 90 of March 29.<sup>1</sup>

Bucharest Legation reported on March 29:<sup>2</sup>

"Hungary demands recognition of her new frontiers with Rumania and proposes the issue of a declaration along the lines of the as yet unsigned declaration of Bled<sup>3</sup> between Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania. Yugoslavia has already agreed. Rumania desires more precise details as only a pledge of non-aggression is provided for, and no frontier guarantee (such as was promised in the semi-official article in the *Pester Lloyd*). Rumania thus renounces the villages and railways of Carpatho-Ukraine, and Gafencu therefore expects to receive today, or at the latest tomorrow, an answer which will make it possible to order demobilization."

End of report.

For our attitude to the Bled Agreement I refer you to telegram No. 136 of August 26<sup>4</sup> of last year and despatch Pol. IV 922 of Feb. 20.<sup>5</sup> As the Bled Agreement, the details of which we do not know, was rendered obsolete by the collapse of the Little Entente, we can only interpret the Yugoslav and Rumanian proposal to put the agreement into force now as meaning that they still maintain their former common attitude towards Hungary and are seeking a common settlement.

<sup>1</sup> In this telegram (7493/E540490), Erdmannsdorff reported: "The Foreign Minister told me that the Yugoslav and Rumanian Ministers had conveyed to him their Government's suggestion that the Bled Agreement should come into force. He had replied that the Agreement would first have to be amended; in particular the minorities question would have to be expressly mentioned under point 3, as much had changed since Aug. 23."

<sup>2</sup> In Bucharest telegram No. 134 (not printed, 7493/E540491-92). The first paragraph read: "Foreign Minister Gafencu is obviously pleased with the Reich Foreign Minister's invitation to him to come to Berlin for Apr. 4 and 5. He will accept, provided he can conclude by tomorrow evening his negotiations with Hungary about reciprocal demobilization." The second paragraph is reproduced in the document here printed, except for the last sentence: "Unless this affair was settled, he said, his visit would be wrongly interpreted."

<sup>3</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 223.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. v of this Series, document No. 221, which was sent as telegram No. 136 to Budapest.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (7489/E540470). This despatch forwarded to the Legation at Budapest copies of the documents printed as Nos. 286, 287 and 289 in vol. v of this Series.

Whether it lies within Hungarian interests, which are not identical in respect of Yugoslavia and Rumania, to accept this proposal, we leave to Hungarian judgement. We should, however, consider it better to avoid giving an appearance of subscribing to the obsolete principles of the Little Entente, and to envisage separate settlements with Yugoslavia and Rumania, according to the present state of relations with them. There is also the consideration of whether it is advisable from the Hungarian point of view, bearing in mind the events since last August, to make the recognition of Hungarian military sovereignty the subject of new agreements.

Please express your personal views on these lines during further conversations. We have no intention of yielding to a possible request for mediation.<sup>6</sup>

Report by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>6</sup> The substance of the telegram cited in footnote 1, and also the second part of the document here printed were transmitted by Weizsäcker to the Legation at Bucharest for information in telegram No. 126 of Mar. 30 (not printed, 1975/438351-52).

## No. 133

7634/E545385

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey*

Telegram

No. 66 of March 31

BERLIN, March 31, 1939—1:30 p.m.  
zu W III 2150.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 53 of March 18.<sup>1</sup>

Should prominent Turkish personages approach you in the near future with remarks like those of Numan, you can say that Numan's statements on Turkey's assessment of the new situation have met with sympathetic interest here. We were also pleased with the readiness displayed by Turkey to cooperate actively in the development of German economic relations with the Balkan States and we believed that direct German-Turkish economic relations, too, could only benefit thereby.

Please use the foregoing to inform Numan, on some convenient occasion, that we appreciate his assessment of the situation all the more, as in recent weeks such an understanding attitude has often been lacking in the Turkish press.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 32.

## No. 134

2767/535836

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 73 of March 31

ANKARA, March 31, 1939—5:00 p.m.

Received April 1—12:30 a.m.

Pol. II 1025.

With reference to your telegram No. 58 of March 24<sup>1</sup> and to my telegram No. 62 of March 23.<sup>2</sup>

As the version current here of the Turkish reply to the British *dé-marche* of March 18<sup>3</sup> was that Turkey had declared her willingness to examine "thoroughly and with particular good will" any inquiry that might be made by Britain, I have today requested Numan to acquaint me with the precise text of the Turkish reply. Numan said that the Turkish reply was word for word as follows:

"In the event of such an enquiry being addressed to them the Turkish Government would consider it carefully (*à fond*) and in the friendly spirit which characterizes the relations between the two countries." Numan added that Turkish policy had not, in the recent critical days, budged an inch from the position which he had repeatedly explained to the Reich Foreign Minister. However friendly her relations with Britain may be, especially on Mediterranean questions, they could never lead to Turkey allowing herself to be used for a march against Germany, or even against Italy.

KROLL

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 83, which was telegram No. 58 to Ankara.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5453/E366629). Kroll reported that he had been informed by Saracoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, that in answer to an enquiry by the British Ambassador as to Turkey's attitude in the case of a German attack on Rumania he had said that Turkey would honour her obligations under the Balkan Pact. Kroll added: "At my request the Foreign Minister then defined Turkey's obligation under the Balkan Pact by taking Rumania as an example. Turkey was only committed to military intervention if the Rumanian inner-Balkan frontiers were threatened by a Balkan State. The obligation did not arise if Rumania's non-Balkan frontier were attacked or if she were attacked by a non-Balkan State. In that event Turkey would remain neutral. He had answered the British Ambassador's question in the same way."

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 58 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 135

1975/438354-55 and 58

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*Telegram<sup>1</sup>

MOST URGENT

No. 139 of March 31

BUCHAREST, March 31, 1939—9:40 p.m.

Received April 1—3:00 a.m.

Pol. IV 2279.

With reference to your telegram No. 126 of March 30.<sup>2</sup>

During the conversations being conducted in Budapest with a view to achieving a *détente* in Hungarian-Rumanian relations and demobilization, the Hungarian Minister<sup>3</sup> demanded recognition of the Ruthenian frontier, that is the relinquishing of Rumanian claims to the four villages and the railway line already mentioned.<sup>4</sup> Rumania, who had mobilized in view of the possibility of villages and all railways to be occupied<sup>5</sup> and had then, because of the large-scale advance by Hungary right up to the Rumanian frontier, further increased her partial mobilization, now saw<sup>6</sup> her hopes disappointed. As Rumania does not want to make villages and railways<sup>7</sup> the subject of barter negotiations, Gafencu wishes at least to try, on the basis of reciprocal demobilization and as a *quid pro quo* for the recognition of the Ruthenian frontier, to obtain from Hungary at least a reciprocal declaration of non-aggression, and proposes that this should be agreed by Hungary . . . (group missing)<sup>8</sup> but separately with Rumania on the one hand, and Yugoslavia on the other. Hungary had pledged herself to such an arrangement by initialling the Bled Agreement.<sup>9</sup> As a preliminary,<sup>10</sup> Rumania and Yugoslavia had considered it most expedient to make this proposal, which had today nothing further to do with the no longer existent Little Entente.

I had<sup>11</sup> immediately informed Gafencu, in a purely private way, of my serious misgivings over this course:

It was known what difficulties had been caused by the formula, sponsored at the time by Italy, which had led to Bled; it therefore

<sup>1</sup> This telegram as received in Berlin was corrupt. Corrections taken from the draft in the Bucharest Legation files (7063/E524157/1-4) are indicated in footnotes.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 132, footnote 6.

<sup>3</sup> This should read "Hungary".

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 29 and 122.

<sup>5</sup> The passage from "Rumania . . . occupied" should read: "Rumania who, in view of the possible occupation of the villages and railway line, had mobilized".

<sup>6</sup> This should read: "sees".

<sup>7</sup> This should read: "railway".

<sup>8</sup> This should read: "simultaneously".

<sup>9</sup> See vol. V of this Series, documents Nos. 221 and 223.

<sup>10</sup> This should read: "Therefore".

<sup>11</sup> This should read: "have".

appeared to me more expedient to treat the reciprocal demobilization as a separate question, since the continuation of the present state of affairs was hardly tolerable from a military [and] economic point of view. Indeed nervousness is steadily increasing in the country. My Italian,<sup>12</sup> Greek<sup>13</sup> and Yugoslav<sup>14</sup> colleagues also share this view and these anxieties.

The Rumanian Government, who have already given way in the question of the occupation of part of the Carpatho-Ukraine, who now relinquish their claim to village[s] and railway line, and who, finally, have been publicly castigated in a speech by Csáky, need something to justify internal political<sup>15</sup> mobilization and demobilization. Still more serious complications might easily ensue from this, especially as the reasons for Hungarian stubbornness are not understood here. Gafencu asked me, if possible, to find out privately what these reasons were.

There is also noticeable anti-German feeling amongst the people, who think we have sufficient control over Hungary, and that she does not undertake anything without Germany. That Foreign Minister Gafencu cannot go to Berlin in view of the tension prevailing here, which can only be overcome by diplomatic means, is a matter of sincere regret to him and his King. He promised, as reported by telephone, definitely to accept any date after Easter which might be fixed by the Reich Foreign Minister, and not to undertake any journey abroad before making this visit; he also requests that the date be made public as soon as it is agreed upon, which would have favourable political effect[s] as proving the solidity of German-Rumanian relations.

FABRICIUS

<sup>12</sup> Pellegrino Ghigi.

<sup>13</sup> Konstantinos Collas.

<sup>14</sup> Jovan Dučić.

<sup>15</sup> This should read: "for internal politics".

## No. 136

5849/E428347-48

### *The Charge d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 100 of March 31

LONDON, March 31, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received March 31—7:45 p.m.

P. 3442.

According to Reuter, the Prime Minister made the following statement in the House of Commons today:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> From here on in English in the original. See also *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, col. 2415.

"As I said this morning, His Majesty's Government have no official confirmation of the rumours of any projected attack on Poland and they must not therefore be taken as accepting them as true.

I am glad to take this opportunity of stating again the general policy of His Majesty's Government. They have constantly advocated the adjustment, by way of free negotiation between the parties concerned, of any differences that may arise between them. They consider that this is the natural and proper course where differences exist.

In their opinion there should be no question incapable of solution by peaceful means and they would see no justification for the substitution of force or threats of force for the method of negotiation.

As the House is aware, certain consultations are now proceeding with other Governments. In order to make perfectly clear the position of His Majesty's Government in the meantime before those consultations are concluded, I now have to inform the House that, during that period, in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence, and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Polish Government all support in their power.

They have given the Polish Government an assurance to this effect.

I may add that the French Government have authorized me to make it plain that they stand in the same position in this matter as do His Majesty's Government."<sup>3</sup>

KORDT

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 137.

## No. 137

7994/E575618

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 103 of March 31

LONDON, March 31, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received April 1—4 a.m.

P. 3470.

With reference to my telegram No. 100 of March 31.<sup>2</sup>

I learn that the phrasing of Chamberlain's statement was by Sir John Simon. The Foreign Office spokesman, Peake,<sup>3</sup> emphasized that the prerequisite for British assistance is the fulfilment of *both* conditions indicated by Chamberlain. It is particularly significant that British

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 136.

<sup>3</sup> C.B.P. Peake, serving at that time in the News Department.



assistance will become effective only when it is established, first, that German action clearly threatens Polish independence (in the judgement of Britain) and, secondly, that the Polish Government "accordingly" consider it vital to counter German action by military resistance.

1) The pledge of assistance on the fulfilment of both conditions operates only for the period up to the conclusion of the negotiations still in progress.

2) The first part of the statement leaves the settlement of all controversial points, including colonial questions, open to negotiation.

3) The second part of the statement leaves it doubtful, to say the least, whether military action against Danzig constitutes a *casus belli* for the British Government.

4) The News Department of the Foreign Office has repeatedly and urgently requested Baron Hahn, diplomatic correspondent of the DNB, to point out to authoritative quarters that Chamberlain's statement in no way represented a preliminary step towards a policy of encirclement. The Prime Minister and the British Government attached importance to this fact being established.

KORDT

## No. 138

388/211472

### *The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Afghanistan*

BERLIN, March 31, 1939.

Sent April 12.

zu Pol. V 2739.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your report No. 419 of March 6, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

As regards social intercourse with the members of the Soviet Russian Mission, we can only give general instructions from here that the greatest reserve should be adopted, though this must always keep to correct forms. For the rest, the final decision must be left to your judgement according to the circumstances of each case.

In principle, the members of the German colony should not attend functions arranged by the Soviet Mission, and should refuse any invitations under a polite pretext.

By order:  
BISMARCK

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (388/211470-71). The Minister had sought guidance as to what invitations to social functions given by the Russian Ambassador could be accepted by the Legation staff and the German Colony.

## No. 139

141/127223

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 300

BERLIN, March 31, 1939.

On his own initiative, the Belgian Ambassador today referred to the Anglo-French conversations about assistance in the event of German action against Switzerland, Holland and Belgium.<sup>1</sup> Vicomte Davignon said that Belgian policy remained unchanged. London and Paris had asked for nothing new and had received nothing new in Brussels.

I replied that, even if nothing had been demanded of Brussels, nevertheless one-sided Anglo-French communications might have reached the Belgian Government which might well have a perceptible effect on our known treaty relations<sup>2</sup> with Belgium.

Davignon hastened to affirm that nothing whatever was known to him of such one-sided communications.

The Ambassador will probably bring supplementary information on his return from Brussels.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 93, footnote 2, and document No. 84.

<sup>2</sup> For the German Declaration of Oct. 13, 1937, to respect the integrity and inviolability of Belgium, see vol. v of this Series, document No. 475. See also *Belgium, The Official Account of What Happened 1939-1940* (published for the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, London, 1941), Appendix 4.

## No. 140

583/242054-57

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, March 31, 1939.

St.S. No. 301

The Italian Ambassador called on me today on returning from his official visit to Rome.

Attolico wished to define the situation which had arisen in recent weeks. His most important observation was that a sense of practical politics led Mussolini to discount the possibility of a European war in the near future. The Führer's communication to the Duce<sup>1</sup> had not been without its effect in this respect.

Attolico then went back a long way in order to speak of the repercussions of the German occupation of Bohemia and Moravia and its consequences, and described the following as a confidential and friendly

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 100.

communication for my own private knowledge. He said that the reaction in Rome was a "tremendous one". It should be fully realized that, in the case of the *Anschluss* of Austria, Mussolini was not informed until the last minute by the Prince of Hesse.<sup>2</sup> During the critical developments of last September, the Duce had espoused Germany's cause to a degree that could not be surpassed. At the time of the Vienna Award,<sup>3</sup> Italian policy was in favour of conceding more to the Hungarians than we were, but later, when Germany feared a Hungarian advance towards Carpatho-Ukraine [Italy] firmly ordered Hungary back behind the Award frontier line. Finally, during the events in March, Italy was not informed until the last minute of a move which was in glaring contradiction to Mussolini's well-known letter to Runciman.<sup>4</sup> Instead of the Italians now being given precedence, they had, without prior notification, been drawn, as a partner in the Axis, into a game which must inevitably result in setbacks for Mussolini, setbacks which had been very severe, perhaps even too severe. His prestige had suffered in his own country (Attolico claims to have heard such remarks as: "Mussolini should be pelted with mud from the gutter", and others). Besides this loss of domestic prestige, there had been sacrifices for Italy in foreign affairs. His own game had been ruined. It had been his turn to move, but he had been thrust aside. Mussolini had, however, acted like a Grandseigneur and, in his great speech in the Forum,<sup>5</sup> had described the Axis as unshakeable. It was, however, necessary to formulate afresh and put in writing our mutual interests within the framework of the Axis.

In continuation of the last argument, Attolico said that, though the Mediterranean had certainly been assigned by us to the Italians, the adjacent countries and the Danube Basin also belonged to this area. Advances were being made far too rapidly in this respect from the German side—Attolico mentioned Reich Minister Funk. Everything was being drawn into the German orbit, and that too quickly. As an example, Attolico suggested that a prominent Italian economist, perhaps Guarneri,<sup>6</sup> might come here and define Italo-German interests.

When Attolico also mentioned Yugoslavia, I referred him to the relevant passage in Mussolini's speech. Attolico then stated that Italy would always favour a consolidated Yugoslav State, but if it came to disintegration, Italy would not allow anyone, not even the Hungarians, to gain access to the Adriatic.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Philip of Hesse. See vol. I of this Series, documents Nos. 352 and 385. For the record of Hesse's telephone conversation with Hitler on Mussolini's reception of the message see *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. XXXI, document 2949-PS, exhibit USA-76, pp. 368-370.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 99.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 483, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 125.

<sup>6</sup> Felice Guarneri, Minister for Foreign Exchange and Currency.

In conclusion Attolico summed up by describing the disagreements to which he had to call attention as being not irreparable. The Axis, for which he had already worked at a time when it was still quite unpopular, was of prime importance to him. But he attached the very greatest importance at this stage of his mission in Berlin to giving the Axis a fresh impetus and to bringing the substance of his remarks to the attention of the Führer. He was not requesting an audience with the Führer, but he hoped that the Führer would regard the matter as being so important that he would himself arrange for an interview.

Summing up, one may perhaps say that Attolico represented his Government as the deceived and discredited "receiver", to whom, in the interests of future comradeship, it would be absolutely necessary to allow a share in the spoils.

The Ambassador, with whom I had been obliged to break off the conversation yesterday, continued it with me today—April 1—and hopes to call on the Reich Foreign Minister shortly, and, later, on the Führer. He did not wish his statements to me to be passed on now, but would like to make them in his own words and with the impressions gained in Rome freshly in his mind. Besides the military discussions (Pariani-Keitel)<sup>7</sup> and possible economic agreements (Guarneri's visit to Berlin), Attolico wishes to have our political *désintéressement* in Albania and Croatia confirmed anew. Furthermore, he will probably return to the plan, superficially discussed before, of taking the South Tyrolese back into the Reich.<sup>8</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>7</sup> See document No. 57.

<sup>8</sup> See documents Nos. 143 and 163.

## No. 141

115/117419-22

*The Head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to the Foreign Minister*

I 3 i 1—G/Ea

BERLIN, MARCH 31, 1939.

Subject: Events in Liechtenstein from March 23 to 26, 1939.

The attempt at a forcible *Anschluss* of Liechtenstein with the Reich has been suppressed. The Liechtenstein and Swiss Governments regard the matter as closed.

A Liechtenstein *Anschluss* movement has existed since March 15, 1938.<sup>1</sup> At that time Dr. Otto Schädler, the leader of the Liechtenstein Vaterländische Union, was received at the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. As the Reich Foreign Minister did not at the time desire an *Anschluss*

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 509, 512, and 514.

with Liechtenstein, the following formula was agreed upon with the leader of the Citizens' Party:

The Citizens' Party, which commands barely 50 per cent of the votes, would try, under pressure of events and the general mood, to nominate Dr. Vogt as Deputy Head of the Government, so as to ensure a steady development in line with our policy. The radical wing of the Party was to be held in check.

On the basis of this arrangement, the line taken by the Liechtenstein Government was, up to February 1939, under the control of our collaborators. On the *Anschluss* of Bohemia and Memel, and in view of the elections in Liechtenstein, the radical wing withdrew from the leadership of Dr. Otto Schädler and Dr. Vogt. In spite of constant warnings by Dr. Vogt, the Deputy Head of the Government, the radical group, as a "*volksdeutsch* movement", prepared a *coup d'état* for March 22, 1939. The leaders of the *volksdeutsch* movement, Engineer Schädler and Dr. Beck, made contact with the SA in Feldkirch. Seebacher, the leader of the Feldkirch SA battalion, declared on March 22: "If the *Anschluss* comes off in Liechtenstein we shall in any case get marching orders from the competent authorities." The Liechtensteiners relied on the help of the SA and, having regard to arrangements made with the SA, they postponed the *Putsch* to the evening of March 24. An SA battalion and a company of the NSKK in Feldkirch were alerted on March 23 and 24, 1939.

Meanwhile the rumour of an invasion by the Feldkirch SA spread to Liechtenstein. Dr. Vogt, the Deputy Head of the Government, drew the attention of Dr. Tschofen, the Landrat of Feldkirch, to these rumours and emphasized that, in his view, such a *Putsch* would not be welcome in Berlin, either. By personal persuasion and arrest of the leaders he succeeded in suppressing the Liechtenstein movement. In view of this the SA also took no action.

When asked for information by the Berne Government, the Liechtenstein Government stated that plans for a *Putsch* had existed but had not materialized. The Swiss Legation called at the Foreign Ministry and requested that further disturbances be avoided.

The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle immediately issued orders, partly paralleling the instructions from the Foreign Ministry, to hold the Feldkirch SA in check. On the evening of March 25, a representative of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle arrived in Innsbruck and there, together with the Gauleiter, interrogated the SA leaders taking part. As a result of the enquiries, the representative of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle was able, by March 26, to get in touch with our collaborator, Dr. Vogt. It was agreed that the Liechtenstein Government should, in a telegram to Berne and in an official communiqué (see appendix),<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (115/117423).

deny any serious attempt at a *Putsch*, or even at interference on the part of the Reich German authorities. Dr. Vogt will see to it that no criminal proceedings are taken against the Liechtenstein ringleaders. The Prince of Liechtenstein will probably be prepared, when he takes the oath of allegiance on May 2,<sup>3</sup> to grant an amnesty for any sentences that may have been passed. Negotiations through intermediaries are still in progress. About thirty refugees are to be sent back from Feldkirch, as soon as it has been established that they will either incur no punishment, or only a fine.

I have given orders, in agreement with the Gauleiter in the Tyrol,<sup>4</sup> that the Reich Germans responsible be removed from the frontier area and called to account for their actions.

Thanks to the speedy intervention of Dr. Vogt, collaborator of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle, as well as to the negotiations between the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and him, it was possible completely to avoid the international consequences of this venture.

Heil Hitler!

LORENZ

SS-Obergruppenführer

<sup>3</sup> Franz Josef II succeeded his uncle as reigning Prince of Liechtenstein on July 25, 1938; the official ceremonies of paying homage (*Huldigung*) took place on May 29, 1939.

<sup>4</sup> Franz Hofer, Reichsstatthalter and Gauleiter of Tyrol-Vorarlberg.

## No. 142

5570/E308825

### *The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Yugoslavia*

Telegram

No. 83

BERLIN, April 1, 1939—7:00 p.m.  
zu W 449 (g), W 474 (g).<sup>1</sup>

With reference to [your telegrams] Nos. 74 and 78.<sup>1</sup>

As Consul General Neuhausen is aware, the Field Marshal and the Reich Foreign Minister have reserved for themselves the final decision on the conclusion of the credit transaction, so as to attach political conditions, should the case arise. Should the progress of negotiations at your end warrant it, an effort will be made to obtain these decisions about the middle of April. The date of the Field Marshal's return<sup>2</sup> is, however, so far undecided. In case postponement of the conclusion of the transaction should then appear expedient for political reasons, the possibility of basing this on the technical or commercial terms of the transaction should be held open.

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 105 and 128.

<sup>2</sup> Göring was on holiday in Italy Mar. 21-Apr. 18.

Please arrange for the industrial representatives to conduct negotiations along these lines, and continue to report on the course of the negotiations. I assume that the aircraft industries' tenders have also been sent in meanwhile. Price questions will be examined here. Further relevant information follows.

WIEHL

## No. 143

2410/511062-83 .

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 303

BERLIN, April 1, 1939.  
Pol. IV 2364.

While discussing the South Tyrol in another connection with me today, the Italian Ambassador recommended that the conversations which had already taken place between Count Magistrati and Senior Counsellor Heinburg<sup>1</sup> should be resumed, in order to review the material available on the South Tyrol conditions.

Attolico then said that there must still be irregular connections between Germany and the South Tyrol and hinted at Bureau No. 4 (?) of the APA.<sup>2</sup> He also mentioned among others Gruppenführer Wolff of the SS. I denied from the outset that Gruppenführer Wolff could have any part in this and also at once expressed my doubts regarding the Foreign Policy Office.

Then Attolico also mentioned the rumour at present circulating in Munich that Mussolini intended to give the South Tyrol to the Führer as a birthday present.

As the Ambassador saw that I did not really believe his remarks, he said that even if we spoke with the tongues of angels there would be passive resistance among the peasants in South Tyrol, which was creating an intolerable state of affairs. He had learnt this direct from the Prefect of Bolzano.<sup>3</sup> Attolico added that he would take up the whole subject of the South Tyrol with the Reich Foreign Minister as a part of general Axis policy.

I again informed Attolico about the stage reached in our scheme for repatriating Reich Germans from the South Tyrol and promised him that a detailed discussion would take place between Count Magistrati and Senior Counsellor Heinburg.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No record has been found.

<sup>2</sup> Aussenpolitisches Amt (Foreign Policy Office). See Appendix V.

<sup>3</sup> G. Mastromattei.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 163.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "1. Enquiries regarding para. 2 have not produced any positive results. 2. File. Hei[nburg] 12/4."

## No. 144

119/118097

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 306

BERLIN, April 1, 1939.

Today Attolico again broached the Croat question.<sup>1</sup> I gave him the most formal assurance that everything had been done to allay his anxiety about contact between the Croats and German authorities.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See also documents Nos. 55 and 94.

## No. 145

2943/570052-57

*Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department<sup>1</sup>*THE AALAND ISLANDS QUESTION<sup>2</sup>

1) After the Crimean War in 1856 Russia had to give an undertaking to France and Britain not to fortify the Aaland Islands or to station any military forces therein. In 1917, after her separation from Russia, Finland, without more ado, claimed the Aaland Islands for herself. However, a plebiscite in the Islands in 1919 resulted in a large majority for union with Sweden. To remove the resulting tension between the two countries, the Council of the League of Nations decided in 1921 that the Archipelago should remain under Finnish rule but should be demilitarized and neutralized by an agreement between the interested Powers. Thereupon the Convention on the non-fortification and neutralization of the Aaland Islands was concluded in Geneva on October 20, 1921, under the auspices of the League of Nations.<sup>3</sup> The Signatory Powers are Germany, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Italy, Latvia, Poland and Sweden, but not, however, Soviet Russia. The provisions for demilitarization of the islands are very thorough: "no fortifications or other military constructions, no garrisoning of armed forces, no landing of warships, etc." In the event of war, the area of the islands is to be regarded as a neutral zone which may not be used either directly or indirectly as a base for military operations. On the application of one or more Signatory Powers, the Council of the League of Nations must decide on measures necessary for securing the

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<sup>1</sup> The document is unsigned and undated. It bears the following marginal note: "Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Gaus for the Reich Foreign Minister."

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, chapter iv, and this volume, document No. 127.

<sup>3</sup> See *League of Nations Treaty Series* (Geneva, 1922), vol. ix, pp. 212-221.



carrying out of the Convention or for preventing a violation of its provisions. (Art. 7, I). Only in the case of a surprise attack upon the islands may Finland herself take the necessary defence measures. (Art. 7 II).

2) On January 26 of this year the Finnish and Swedish Ministers delivered Notes<sup>4</sup> with identical texts at the Foreign Ministry, stating that Finland and Sweden had agreed to a number of amendments to the 1921 Convention and asking for the concurrence of the German Government. With the assent of all Signatories, the matter was to be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations. The main points of the Finno-Swedish agreement are as follows: the neutral character of the island zone is to be maintained. Demilitarization, on the other hand, is to be considerably curtailed. In the southern part of the zone Finland is to have a completely free hand for military protective measures. In the northern part she is to have the right to certain defence measures for ten years: military training of the population, stationing of troops also from other parts of the country, mobile coastal artillery, etc. In the event of danger of war Sweden shall, at the request of Finland, also be able to take part in the defence measures. Further, it is to be laid down that no belligerent Power shall have the right to intervene on its own initiative by armed force to protect the neutrality of the islands.

3) According to the 1921 Convention the decision on all measures which prove necessary for the protection of the neutrality and demilitarization of the islands rests with the Council of the League of Nations. In principle this will remain unchanged under the new Finno-Swedish proposals. By accepting these proposals therefore, which in substance replace the old agreement by a new one, we would again be recognizing the competence of the Council of the League of Nations. It is also a contradiction in terms that the two Northern States themselves should primarily base their proposals on the failure of the security system of the League of Nations, that they should deduce therefrom the necessity for direct Finnish and Swedish military measures, but that all other Signatory Powers are to continue to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Council of the League of Nations regarding measures permitted to them. We could therefore for good reasons reject such a system and demand the complete exclusion of the Council of the League of Nations. As a result tedious negotiations for another settlement would then probably be necessary and, if such a settlement proved possible at all, the participation of the Soviet Union could probably not be avoided, though, however, as a permanent Council Power, they also have a voice under the present system.

4) In the opinion of our military authorities, Germany is interested in

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 464.

the Aaland Islands remaining neutral in the event of war, as provided in the 1921 Convention. In the present situation this no longer appears assured if the islands are unfortified, as the Russians today have forces sufficient to take possession of the unfortified islands even against the resistance by Sweden and Finland. With the further growth of the Russian Navy, Russian intentions will go beyond the defensive task of securing the Gulf of Finland and will aim at political and military supremacy in the northern Baltic Sea. On that account it must be expected that the military leaders of the Soviet Union will strive for the possession of the Aaland Islands, first in order to be in a better position to interrupt German commercial sea-communications and secondly to outflank German military approach routes to the Gulf of Finland. The fortifications planned will obviously be regarded by Finland as being also primarily directed against Russia. The Swedes on the other hand, even though they have now expressed, at the insistence of the Finnish Government, their agreement to the fortification of the islands, have probably given more thought to the possibility that, in a German-Russian conflict, Germany might occupy the islands as a preventive measure in order to forestall the Russians. But, as our military interests are primarily directed to the maintenance and protection of the neutrality of the islands, we need take no offence at Sweden's proposed participation.<sup>5</sup> Should the case arise that in a war Russia, Finland and Sweden were aligned against us, they would in any case try to use the Aaland Islands as a base against us.

5) The High Command of the Navy wishes the opportunity to be taken to discuss with the Swedish Government the maintenance of deliveries of ore to Germany in the event of war and safeguarding its transport. As the settlement of the Aaland Islands question is an integral part of the Finnish and Swedish policy of neutrality, it would in fact present a natural starting point for such a conversation with the Swedes. The conversation would probably have to be conducted in such a way as not to make the discussion of the question of deliveries of ore a direct condition of our assent to an amendment of the 1921 Convention. Nor can it be expected that it will be possible to arrive at a precise and binding agreement with Sweden on deliveries of ore. We can merely try to induce the Swedish Government to make a general statement somewhat to the effect that, in the event of war, they do not intend to take measures which might have an unfavourable effect on the normal export of ore to Germany.

6) Taking all factors into account it would probably be advisable not to make our agreement to the Finno-Swedish proposals dependent on the conclusion of a differently worded new convention completely excluding the League of Nations. It would suffice for us to state that we could

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Only as long as Sweden is not a belligerent Power."

no longer recognize as binding upon Germany any resolutions taken by the Council of the League on the basis of the Convention. We can then leave it to the other Powers to decide what conclusions to draw from such a statement. It would also be advisable when answering the Swedish Note to initiate the conversation on ore deliveries orally in the way mentioned above. Before it is decided to treat the Finno-Swedish proposals in this way, however, it will be necessary first to come to an understanding with the Italian Government regarding the question of the League of Nations.

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[EDITORS' NOTE. On April 1 Hitler made a speech at Wilhelmshaven dealing mainly with subjects of his own foreign policy, British "encirclement" and the Anglo-German Naval Agreement. For an English translation of relevant extracts from this speech see Norman H. Baynes: *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, April 1922 to August 1939* (London, 1942) (hereinafter cited as Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*), vol. II, pp. 1590-1602.]

### No. 146

1975/438360-61

#### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 96 of April 2

BUDAPEST, April 2, 1939—2:45 p.m.

Received April 2—6:00 p.m.

Pol. IV 2301.

With reference to your telegram No. 103.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister told me that the Bucharest report, that he had demanded recognition by the Rumanian Government of the new frontiers with Rumania, was incorrect. He would not do this, so as to avoid Rumanian counter-claims. The Rumanian Government would, in effect, be obliged to give recognition in the near future when they claimed toll-rights on the connecting line of railway to Poland, which ran through the eastern tip of Carpatho-Ukraine. He had pointed out to the Rumanian Minister<sup>2</sup> that only specifically designated articles in the *Pester Lloyd* were to be considered as semi-official. Consequently Hungary had not promised Rumania any frontier guarantee. He had declared his readiness to negotiate to the Rumanian Minister, but not under the threat of Rumanian bayonets, therefore only after the completion of Rumanian demobilization.

With reference to the conversation between the Hungarian Minister

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 132.

<sup>2</sup> Raoul Bossy.

in Berlin and the State Secretary,<sup>3</sup> Csáky gave the assurance that the Hungarian Government would not consent to the Agreement of Bled coming into force now, even in an altered form, as was being suggested by Rumania, supported by Yugoslavia. He had told the Rumanian Minister that the world would laugh if recognition of Hungarian military sovereignty were proclaimed now.

The Rumanian Minister had asked him, with a view to strengthening Gafencu's political position in the country, to send a written communication, designed for publication later, merely saying that the Hungarian Government would respect the Rumanian frontier as scrupulously as hitherto. As to problems arising from the new frontier delimitation, Hungary was ready to negotiate with the Rumanian Government through diplomatic channels in the most conciliatory spirit, in the hope of achieving complete understanding between the two nations. This proposal contains in its first and last paragraphs the substance of the Hungarian Foreign Minister's written communication of March 25 to the Rumanian Minister, telegram No. 85 of March 25<sup>4</sup> but omits the passage relating to Bled and mobilization, as this, in the view of the Rumanian Foreign Minister, does not seem suitable for publication. In the face of the new general political development (London efforts) Csáky wants to give Rumania as little as possible to go on and is not, for the present, considering negotiations with Yugoslavia, in order to avoid even the semblance of a linking up with the Little Entente.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>3</sup> The reference is evidently to a conversation between the Hungarian Minister and the Under State Secretary, Woermann, on Mar. 31. In a memorandum (169/82532) on it Woermann wrote: "The Hungarian Minister called on me today and stated, on instructions from his Government, that Hungary now intends to enter into negotiations with Rumania for a convention to include an agreement on no resort to force, and a settlement on minorities. A little later, corresponding negotiations would be entered into with Yugoslavia."

"I told M. Sztójay that we had had somewhat different information from Budapest and Bucharest, namely that what was involved was putting into force the Bled Agreement between Rumania, Hungary and Yugoslavia. I informed him of the instructions sent to our Minister in Budapest [see document No. 132] adding that these were instructions on language and not for his intervention in the negotiations. M. Sztójay referred to the memorandum of February 10 handed to the State Secretary (memorandum by the State Secretary No. 143 of February 17 [see vol. v of this Series, document No. 292 and footnote 1 thereto]). Hungary had already then stated that she would only negotiate bilaterally, in no circumstances on the basis of the Bled Agreement, and in slow tempo. He added that there was no longer any question of agreements over Hungarian military sovereignty with Rumania and Yugoslavia." The substance of this conversation was sent, on Apr. 1, to Budapest in telegram No. 106 (not printed, 1975/438359).

<sup>4</sup> In this telegram (1975/438345) Erdmannsdorff gave the gist of a Note just handed by Csáky to the Rumanian Minister as follows: "The Hungarian Government will respect the new frontier with Rumania as scrupulously as the old. This coincides with the former Czech-Rumanian frontier. The Declaration of Bled of August 23, 1938 relates also to this part of the common frontier. The Hungarian Government declare that they are prepared to withdraw all defensive measures undertaken on account of the Rumanian military measures, on the one condition that the Rumanian Government declare that they have begun to withdraw the military measures undertaken since March 15. Twenty-four hours later the Hungarian Government will act accordingly. The Hungarian Government are prepared to negotiate in a conciliatory spirit with the Rumanian Government through diplomatic channels on any question about the new frontiers."

1625/388447-48

## No. 147

*Circular of the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

BERLIN, April 3, 1939—10:00 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 1044.

The British Government's declaration of assistance to Poland, announced by Chamberlain in the House of Commons on March 31,<sup>2</sup> is, according to its text, only of a provisional nature. It is designed to clarify the British attitude during the intervening period which is still necessary to achieve conclusive results in the British consultations with other Governments. As the British Government have found themselves obliged to deny rumours of an imminent German attack on Poland as being without foundation, the prematurely issued statement of the declaration of assistance to Poland was in no way justified by the foreign political situation, but was, rather, caused by the British Government's need to give the world and public opinion at home, which had already become impatient, a first result of the assiduous diplomatic activity begun by the Foreign Office on March 18.<sup>3</sup> [In these circumstances there is no cause for us as yet to adopt any kind of final attitude to the British action.]<sup>4</sup>

Our line on the British attempt at encirclement, and on the dangers incurred by the States who are a party to it, has already been expressed in the Führer's speech at Wilhelmshaven on Saturday.<sup>5</sup> In any conversations please display a dispassionate and completely reserved attitude [and rebuff all conjectures on the probable German attitude].<sup>4</sup> (From here onwards not for Warsaw.) In particular you are requested not to discuss in any way whatever the present state of German-Polish relations.<sup>6</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the principal Missions in Europe, the Consulate at Geneva, and the Embassies at Washington and Tokyo.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 136.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 58.

<sup>4</sup> The passages in square brackets were deleted from the draft before despatch.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., Apr. 1. See Editors' Note, p. 183.

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 159.

## No. 148

799/273072

*Memorandum by an Official of the Protocol Department*BERLIN, April 3, 1939.  
zu Prot. 3770 IV 101.<sup>1</sup>

At 8:49 p.m. on April 2, on the instructions of the Foreign Minister, I welcomed M. Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, in his saloon coach at

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

the Schlesischer Station as he was passing through Berlin and asked him if wished for anything during his stop in Berlin and for his journey through Germany.<sup>2</sup>

Foreign Minister Beck expressed no wishes. In cautiously and carefully chosen phrases and keeping his eyes all the time on Ambassador Lipski, who was also present, Foreign Minister Beck again expressed his pleasure and satisfaction at the Reich Foreign Minister's recent visit to Warsaw.<sup>3</sup> He hoped that the Reich Foreign Minister had returned with pleasant impressions and that he felt that his increased knowledge of people and the impressions he gained from what he had seen in Warsaw would be valuable and useful for his further work on German-Polish relations.

I remained entirely receptive and left the Polish Foreign Minister's compartment as soon as was compatible with the requirements of courtesy.

Submitted to the Foreign Minister.

VON HALEM

<sup>2</sup> Beck arrived in London for conversations on Apr. 3 and left on Apr. 7. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, chapter I.

<sup>3</sup> Ribbentrop had had a conversation with Beck at Warsaw on Jan. 26, 1939, see vol. v of this Series, document No. 126.

## No. 149

Nuremberg document 120-C  
Exhibit GB-41

### *Directive by the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht*

TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERLIN, April 3, 1939.

Officer Only

5 copies.

WFA. No. 37/39 g Kdos. Chfs. L. Ia

2nd copy

Subject: Directive for the Wehrmacht, 1939-40.

The "Directive for the Uniform Preparation for War by the Wehrmacht" for 1939-40 is being issued afresh.<sup>1</sup>

Part I ("Frontier Security") and Part III ("Danzig") will be issued in the middle of April.<sup>2</sup> They remain basically unchanged.

Part II ("Operation White"<sup>3</sup>) is attached herewith.<sup>4</sup> The signature of the Führer will be appended later.

For "Operation White" the Führer has issued the following additional directives:

<sup>1</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "Attached". These parts of the directive were issued on Apr. 11. See document No. 185.

<sup>3</sup> Literally "Case White" [*Fall Weiss*]. The German code name for the attack on Poland.

<sup>4</sup> On the copy here printed Part II is not attached; it appears as Enclosure II to the document printed below as No. 185.

1) Preparations must be made in such a way that the operation can be carried out at any time as from September 1, 1939.

2) OKW is charged with drawing up a precise time table<sup>5</sup> for "Operation White" and is to arrange for synchronized timing between the three branches of the Wehrmacht through discussions.

3) The plans of the branches of the Wehrmacht and the details for the time table must be submitted to OKW by May 1, 1939.

The Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht,

KEITEL

*Distribution List*

High Command of the Army	. . . 1	Copy No. 1
High Command of the Navy	. . . 1	" " 2
Reich Air Minister and C-in-C of the		
Luftwaffe	. . . 1	" " 3
High Command of the Wehrmacht	. 2	" " 4 and 5

<sup>5</sup> A provisional time table was drawn up and submitted to Hitler on June 22. For the text see *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. xxxiv, document 126-C, Exhibit GB-45, pp. 443-445.

No. 150

623/250874-75

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 117 of April 3

ROME, April 4, 1939—2:00 a.m.

Received April 4—4:40 a.m.

Reports reaching me today from a reliable source to the effect that Italian-Albanian negotiations with the object of establishing a Protectorate were in progress and were expected to be concluded before the end of this week, induced me to call on Ciano this evening. He received me with the remark that he had been about to ask me to come and see him for the same reason, as he considered it important to inform us as quickly as possible and, he added, the Hungarians too, as to what was really happening.

According to his account, the King of Albania,<sup>1</sup> under the impact of the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia, requested Italy just over a fortnight ago to make the present treaty relations closer. On the 23rd the King, alleging imminent anti-Axis activity by Yugoslavia and Greece, had asked for the despatch of Italian troops. This Rome had categorically refused when it became evident that the King, who has always been a "voyou" and who had been deprived by the Italian-

<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Bey Zogu, King Zog I of the Albanians.

Yugoslav settlement of a card which he had frequently and readily played, wished to involve the troops in "anti-Yugoslav machinations." Thereupon the King's attitude had radically changed and had become definitely hostile, with the result that not only had the negotiations suggested by himself failed to make progress but threats and outrages against Italians had occurred, which, increasing daily, had now led to a flood of telegrams to the Duce requesting protection, not only from Italians but also from Albanians, by whom, with the exception of those in his own circle, the King is hated. The Duce was now contemplating sending an Italian battleship, as the troops, although they have been concentrated at Bari for a few days, are not yet ready for embarkation. Moreover, Mussolini had today instructed his Minister in Tirana<sup>2</sup> to give the King a warning, amounting to an ultimatum, against acts prejudicial to the lives and rights of Italian subjects, and to state that, even if these acts were the work of alleged gangs, he would be held personally responsible. An attempt will also be made to continue the negotiations, which are not being conducted here but in Tirana, in order to achieve a closer *Anschluss* of Albania to Italy, which would, however, leave intact the sovereignty and territorial independence of Albania, and would, in any case, take a lesser form than a Protectorate, such as is the case in Bohemia and Moravia. If the King is sufficiently compliant, which Ciano did not appear necessarily to expect, negotiations will take place with him, otherwise Italy will act independently. In any case, the Duce had no intention of putting up with further Albanian attacks on the persons, lives and property of Italians resident there.

Ciano expects that matters will clarify themselves in a day or two. In my presence he gave instructions for denials, through Radio Bari in the Italian and Albanian languages, of rumours of more far-reaching Italian intentions.

From his account it appeared that the whole question had developed more quickly than was expected here.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>2</sup> Francesco Jacomoni di San Savino.

## No. 151

2767/535847

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 22

BERLIN, April 4, 1939.  
Pol. II 1098.

The Turkish Ambassador<sup>1</sup> called on me today at 12:30 p.m. at his own request. He informed me that he could repeat on behalf of his

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<sup>1</sup> Mehmet Hamdi Arpag.



Government the assurances that all rumours to the effect that the Turkish Government were adopting a favourable attitude towards the British efforts at encirclement were without any foundation.<sup>2</sup>

I took note of this statement.

RIEBBENTROP

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 134.

## No. 152

5555/E395212

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 153 of April 4

BUCHAREST, April 4, 1939—8:30 p.m.

Received April 4—10:45 p.m.

W 503 g.

The Rumanian Air Ministry today ordered 30 Ju 112 fighter aircraft and 15 spare engines to a total of 5.1 million RM. The Air Ministry wishes to appoint commissions as soon as possible under the new Economic Treaty to handle the total project of 40 million RM.<sup>1</sup>

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 144 of Apr. 6 (not printed, 5555/E395214) Clodius stated that this order was approved and that a commission would be sent to Bucharest shortly.

## No. 153

2767/536589

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 156 of April 4

BUCHAREST, April 4, 1939—11:45 p.m.

Received April 5—2:00 a.m.

Pol. IV 2370.

I. As Hungary refuses to make a declaration to Rumania relating to the frontier or to non-aggression and also refuses to make any territorial concessions in the Carpatho-Ukraine, Rumania, who regards the direct cause for tension as being eliminated, will, nevertheless, begin demobilization tomorrow and complete it by Easter. Foreign Minister Gafencu told me this with the remark that he had suffered a reverse. He regretted this as he had needed support at present for his German policy in view of enmity at home and abroad. Hungary, however, had shown that she did not want a *rapprochement* with Rumania.

II. On general policy Gafencu said that he would in no way allow himself to be drawn into the encirclement policy against Germany. He was the most decided opponent of the policy of collective security. If Britain and France wanted to make a one-sided declaration that, in the event of an attack on Rumania, they would regard themselves as Rumania's allies, he could hardly fail to take note of this. It would be a different matter, however, if Soviet Russia were to participate in a declaration of this kind, because that could be interpreted as an anti-German attitude. He was sincere in his intention further to extend relations with Germany, particularly in the economic political sphere, and he was glad that he would be able to state this again in Berlin soon. For the rest, he had so far no definite programme for the Berlin conversations.<sup>1</sup>

FABRICIUS

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 135.

## No. 154

1818/415223-25

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

WARSAW, April 4, 1939.

Received April 5.

Pol. V 3006.

Subject: Poland's attitude after Chamberlain's declaration.

Chamberlain's statement on Britain's readiness to render assistance to Poland<sup>1</sup> has been received with satisfaction by public opinion in Poland. The nervousness which last week amounted to a war-psychosis has noticeably decreased, even if a certain patriotic excitement remains, which is being exploited by war propaganda in the interests of the loan for air raid precautions, towards which 140 million zloty have already been subscribed. The press, however, was instructed to observe a certain reserve as regards the attitude to the international situation as created by the British guarantee, probably in order not to irritate Germany unnecessarily, and not to arouse too great illusions here.

The following points of view are put forward in statements on the political situation by leading officials of the Foreign Ministry: Poland could feel a special satisfaction that there were no longer—particularly as in the Treaty of Locarno—two different standards for security in the west and in the east. As for relations with Germany, Poland for her part was not aiming at any changes of the good relations created in

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 136.

1934. As a result of alterations which had taken place in her immediate neighbourhood, and in the sphere of Polish foreign interests, the "equilibrium", which had been one of the prerequisites of the German-Polish Declaration of 1934, had been disturbed. In the constellation at that time, Poland had had the French alliance, which had presented no obstacle to the German-Polish *détente*. If at present, after Germany's great increase in power, Poland received in addition a British guarantee, this really only meant the restoration of the "equilibrium" and thus, in a certain sense, a return to the position of 1934.

With regard to the Danzig question, the Foreign Ministry continues to emphasize that Poland will not submit to force. On the other hand, the possibility and necessity of removing certain differences by negotiation is admitted. So far it is not clear whether, over and above this, Poland expects that, as a result of the final British guarantee, she will be obliged to adopt an accommodating attitude in the Danzig question. It is nevertheless interesting that such rumours are circulating here and the statement by the British Ambassador<sup>2</sup> to the same effect, on which I reported in telegram No. 56 of March 30,<sup>3</sup> perhaps justifies the assumption that, in connection with the frontier guarantee, London is aiming at a settlement of the most important German-Polish differences.

So far there are no signs that the intransigent Polish attitude in the Danzig question has yet been in any way relaxed. Nevertheless there seems to be a readiness for certain concessions in the minorities question. I hear from a reliable source that in the last few days the Polish Ministry of the Interior has issued very emphatic instructions for the protection of the German minority, and even the Western League<sup>4</sup> has received orders to exercise greater moderation. The accommodating attitude to the German minority is also interpreted by many as meaning that the Polish Government want to avoid anything which might make the western part of Poland appear as a source of constant unrest in the eyes of the British.

According to reports here, the decisions in London seem, incidentally, to have been made very hurriedly. I learn from circles in close contact with the British Embassy here that the news of such far-reaching British assurances to Poland came as a complete surprise even to Kennard, the Ambassador.

V. MOLTKE

<sup>2</sup> Sir Howard Kennard.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2821/548764); the relevant paragraph reads: "The British Ambassador here, who has latterly shown particular interest in the Danzig question and its implications as a disturbance to peace, told me today that in his view the Poles would have to take into account the German character of Danzig and sooner or later draw the conclusions. It was of course essential to prepare Polish public opinion for this, which so far the Government had neglected to do, but which he did not consider impossible, once the wave of chauvinism now sweeping the country, which was undoubtedly endangering Beck's position, had subsided again."

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 108.

## No. 155

1813/415241-43

*The Consul in Gdynia to the Foreign Ministry*

GDYNIA, April 4, 1939.

Received April 11.

Pol. V 3112.

Whenever *Volksdeutsche* have called at the Consulate here recently about their own affairs, I have always noticed that they assume that a solution of the Corridor question is imminent. When I question them I am constantly told that some Polish newspapers had discussed the question of the reincorporation of Danzig, and also that at the same time speculations were being made in the Polish press on the possible intentions of the German Reich regarding the return of the Corridor. These questions raised by the *Volksdeutsche* are partly based on the knowledge that the Polish armed forces are being mobilized.

On these questions by *Volksdeutsche*, which I have left unanswered, I have heard the opinion expressed that a large part of the Polish population views the reincorporation of the Corridor very sympathetically on social grounds. It could be assumed that an average of two-thirds of the population would in no way oppose the German troops if they marched in, and this would apply especially to the rural population.

Among the people in the smaller towns in my consular district the attitude of the Polish population would have to be assessed variously. In places where much unemployment prevails, hopes of building up a livelihood are based solely on the actions of our Führer.

It is thought that in certain places the entry of German troops could not be carried out entirely without friction. The Polish coastal villages, from the Pomeranian coast to Grossendorff, are said to be very pro-Polish, especially as the Poles who live there have built themselves houses for summer visitors so as to have a large source of income from seaside tourists.

In Gdynia the population is largely made up of immigrant Galicians and Congress Poles<sup>1</sup> with very few native Pommerellians and Cassubians. Among these Cassubians are a number who have made large profits from speculation in land and from housing when the city of Gdynia developed, and they often possess large dwelling-houses out of which they have made for themselves a very comfortable livelihood. They come mostly from Cassubian peasant and fishing families, who are now very anxious about their property and firmly opposed to everything German.

<sup>1</sup> From Poland as constituted after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, i.e. from the areas formerly under Russian suzerainty.

Nevertheless it can be said generally that the indigenous Poles and Cassubians who formerly lived under German rule in West Prussia have been bitterly disappointed by the actions and attitude of the Polish Government. They nourish a stubborn hatred towards the immigrant Galicians and Congress Poles and would, generally speaking, be glad if this area were again to come under German order and discipline.

Especially those Poles who have served in the German forces and who on discharge had often been granted fairly large war disablement pensions, which, however, have for the most part been cancelled by the Polish authorities, are consistently accorded unfavourable treatment in obtaining employment and are special sufferers from unemployment, which has naturally given rise to great bitterness against the Polish authorities.

The mood of the Poles living in Gdynia is very serious and to some extent depressed.

In the smaller towns, on the other hand, and in the country the Poles are at the moment feeling very expectant and partially hopeful, especially as the economic conditions everywhere are in a parlous state under the Polish administration.

A copy of my report is being sent to the Consulate General at Toruń.

HOFMANN

## No. 156

1687/590067

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 313

BERLIN, April 4, 1939.

At his visit today the British Counsellor of Embassy asked me about the Führer's intentions regarding the German-British Naval Agreement. He wanted to know whether the Führer's statement in his speech at Wilhelmshaven<sup>1</sup> was to be taken as a denunciation of the Naval Agreement.

In reply I told Forbes that, as he knew, the denunciation of an Agreement took place by notification through diplomatic channels.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 183. The passage in Hitler's speech ran: "I once concluded an agreement with Britain—the Naval Agreement. It is based on the ardent desire shared by us all never to be forced to fight a war against Britain. This desire can, however, only be a reciprocal one. If it no longer exists in Britain, then the practical premises for the agreement have been removed. Germany would accept even a situation of this kind with calm composure."

## No. 157

6563/E490298

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 113 of April 5

WASHINGTON, April 5, 1939—6:56 p.m.

Received April 6—4:00 a.m.

W VIIa 810.

With reference to my telegram No. 103 of [March] 25.<sup>1</sup>

Negotiations with interested parties on amending the Treasury decision have so far been without result. The Customs Bureau inclines to free from provisional additional duty, import transactions effected in dollars, free Reichsmarks, and dividend mark credit balances, provided such payment is satisfactorily proved at the time of the customs declaration; on the other hand, it is uncertain whether the Treasury will approve of such amendments. In spite of urgent representations our customs attorneys do not expect a decision within a week. In these circumstances, I request authority by telegram to hold informal talks with the Customs Bureau and to promise the abolition of the Inland Account Procedure<sup>2</sup> if removal of the additional duties can thereby be attained by April 23.<sup>3</sup>

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 89.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 56.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 119 of Apr. 15 (not printed, 4992/E281733) Clodius replied that the Ministry of Economics intended to cancel the Inland Account procedure in respect of new transactions, provided the U.S. Government would refrain from levying countervailing duties except in cases of Inland Account transactions now being effected. The Embassy was instructed to negotiate along these lines with the Treasury.

## No. 158

100/64469

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 162 of April 5

BERLIN, April 5, 1939—7:15 p.m.

Received April 5—7:25 p.m.

For the Ambassador personally.

With regard to the Albanian question,<sup>1</sup> please inform Ciano from me at the first opportunity that Germany in principle welcomes wholeheartedly any strengthening of Italy and of Italian influence.<sup>2</sup>

RIBBENTROP

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Informed Ciano this evening. Cf. my telegram to Berlin [document No. 171]. M[ackensen] 6/4."

## No. 159

1818/415228

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland*

Letter-Telegram

BERLIN, April 5, 1939.  
Pol. V 3050.

For the Ambassador personally.

Lipski will probably be received here again before Easter. At this interview he will be told the following with reference to his last conversation with the Foreign Minister:<sup>1</sup>

Our offer to Poland will not be repeated. The Polish Government had apparently not fully understood the significance of this offer. We could not help that. The future would show whether Poland had been well advised. The counter proposal put forward by Lipski had, as was known, already been rejected by the Foreign Minister as a basis for negotiations.

End of the statement to Lipski.

Please do not enter into any further material discussions on the German offer and the Polish counter offer. We must prevent Poland from throwing the ball back to us and then manoeuvring us into the position of appearing to have let a Polish offer go unheeded. Other principal Missions have likewise been instructed not to enter into serious discussions on the Polish question but rather to evade the subject calmly and not to give any indication of further German intentions.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 27, see document No. 108.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 147.

## No. 160

1625/388436-37

*Circular of the Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup>*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, April 5, 1939.  
Pol. II 1025<sup>2</sup> Ang. I.

According to reports and confidential information reaching us here,<sup>3</sup> the British encirclement action was inaugurated uniformly on March 18 by *démarches* by the British representatives in a number of capitals. We are particularly well informed about the course of this *démarche* in

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Embassies at London, Paris, Brussels, Rome, Moscow, Warsaw and Legations at The Hague, Berne, Belgrade, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia and Athens.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 134.

<sup>3</sup> See also documents Nos. 58 and 83.

Ankara. There, on that date, the British Ambassador, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, handed the Turkish Foreign Minister a copy of his instructions from Lord Halifax,<sup>4</sup> the contents of which were roughly as follows:

The Rumanian Minister in London, Tilea, had informed Lord Halifax that Germany had made a proposal to Rumania which had the character of an ultimatum. This was that Rumania was to grant Germany a monopoly of her foreign trade and control of her industry, in return for which Germany would give assurances concerning the frontiers of Rumania. M. Tilea asked what Britain's attitude would be if Rumania were to reject this German proposal. Tilea also asked if it would be easier for Britain to give an answer if an understanding were reached on this question between Poland and Rumania and if the States of the Balkan Entente undertook obligations over their external frontiers also. Lord Halifax reserved his reply and asked to be informed of the attitude Turkey would adopt in view of this situation. The Turkish Foreign Minister replied in writing to the British Ambassador that Rumania had not approached Turkey in this matter. Should such an enquiry be addressed to them, the Turkish Government would examine the matter closely and in the friendly spirit which characterized relations between the two countries. They would not hesitate to fulfil the obligations incumbent upon them within the limits of the Balkan Entente.

This course of the British *démarche* clearly shows on how little it was based and how surprising the British action was even to the States of the Balkan Entente.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>4</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. IV, Nos. 390 and 407.

## No. 161

2767/535841

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 652

Moscow, April 5, 1939.  
Pol. V 3124.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: *Démenti* regarding Soviet promises to deliver war material to Poland.

The Soviet press of April 4, 1939, publishes the following Tass communiqué:

"The newspapers *Temps* and *Oeuvre* (of April 1, 1939) have reproduced a Havas report from Moscow which states that the Soviet Union



has allegedly undertaken, or promised to undertake, to supply Poland with war material in the event of war and to close its raw materials market to Germany. Tass is authorized to state that this report is not in accordance with the facts, as the Soviet Union has given no one such promises and has undertaken no such obligations."

This report is strongly reminiscent of the Tass communiqué of March 22, 1939, concerning the denial of a promise by the Soviet Union to render assistance to Poland and Rumania.<sup>1</sup> The present Tass communiqué reflects the same attitude as was taken by the Soviet Government in that case.

The Soviet intention in the Tass communiqué may be to counter, before Beck's arrival in London,<sup>2</sup> reports which have clearly been spread for the purpose of prejudicing the Soviet Government's attitude. In view of the doubts expressed by Poland and Rumania regarding military assistance by the Bolsheviks, the Soviet Government obviously attach importance to making it clear that they have not promised military assistance to anyone. The Kremlin's distrust of the policy of Britain and France, which can constantly be observed here, finds expression in the endeavour not to allow the power factor, which the Soviet Union represents, to be used as a counter in other people's games, and to maintain freedom of action as long as possible. However, the Soviet Government's attitude does not by any means indicate that they would not be prepared to give Poland military assistance if the need arose, but merely that they wish first to see fulfilled the conditions which they have laid down.

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 75.

<sup>2</sup> On Apr. 3.

## No. 162

1625/388461

### *The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1375

THE HAGUE, April 5, 1939.

Received April 11.

Pol. II 1121.

Subject: Alleged Anglo-French promise of assistance to the Netherlands.

With reference to your despatch of March 31—Pol. II 1009.<sup>1</sup>

During a conversation which I had with him a few days ago, the Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> told me that he did not believe that an Anglo-

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5453/E386631-33). This despatch circulated a DNB report of Mar. 28 on Anglo-French promises of assistance to the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland to the Missions in London, Paris, Brussels, Berne, and The Hague and requested further information.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. N. Patijn.

French agreement on mutual assistance in the event of an attack on Holland had been concluded. In any case, not even a hint had ever been given to him here in The Hague by the French and British Ministers. Even the Netherlands Ministers in Paris and London, when asked to report, because of French newspaper announcements at that time, had also replied that they had been unable to ascertain anything authentic regarding an agreement of this kind.<sup>3</sup>

ZECH<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "[For] F[ührer]. R[ibbentrop]." (ii) "To Counsellor Hewel with instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister to inform the Führer. Schmidt 13/4." (iii) "Transmitted by telephone to Counsellor Hewel at Berchtesgaden. [Signature illegible] 14/4."

<sup>4</sup> The following reply (1625/388462-64) was sent to The Hague on Apr. 18, and was circulated to the principal Missions in Europe: "The doubts expressed by the Netherlands Foreign Minister regarding the existence of an Anglo-French agreement on mutual assistance, in case of an attack on the Netherlands, are not easy to understand as, judging from reports in our hands and from statements in the British and French press, there can be no doubt at all of the existence of Anglo-French agreements for the event of an attack on the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. It is known that these agreements formed part of the subject matter of Bonnet's conversations with British Ministers on the occasion of the state visit to London of the President of the French Republic. By order. W[ö]ermann[]."

## No. 163

584/242256-50

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IVa*

BERLIN, April 5, 1939.

e.o. Pol. IV 2419.

submitted on 8.4.39.

Minister Count Magistrati called on me today in order to discuss with me questions concerning the South Tyrol, as had already been announced by Ambassador Attolico during his conversation with the State Secretary on April 1.<sup>1</sup> He began by bringing up the following particular requests and complaints.

1. The Austrians living in the South Tyrol who had acquired German nationality through the reunion of Austria with the Reich were, owing to their close links with the South Tyrolese and their numerous ties with former Austria, a disturbing element and a source of anxiety for the Italian Government. It would therefore be desirable if, under the recently started resettlement scheme for German *Volksgenossen* and Reich nationals from the South Tyrol, consideration were given above all to former Austrians.

2. Count Magistrati expressed his thanks for the information that the music firm of Hieber in Munich had been forbidden to sell the gramophone

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 143.

record of South Tyrolean songs (Pol. IV 464).<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, he requested that steps should be taken to forbid the sale of the record altogether.

3. Count Magistrati brought the conversation back again to the leaflets which had been distributed in the South Tyrol for some time. He drew particular attention to a leaflet that had recently been distributed in the South Tyrol (this is the matter of the leaflet forwarded in the report of the Consulate General at Milan of February 3 of this year—Pol. IV 297 g),<sup>3</sup> which attacks the methods of administration applied in South Tyrol. I explained to him that, according to what we have established by thorough enquiries, the leaflets had certainly not been printed in Germany, and that Reich German agencies and organizations had had nothing to do with the production and distribution of the leaflets, and particularly not the Deutsche Auslandsinstitut in Stuttgart. According to the information we have obtained these leaflets had also not been printed in Basle. The names of the firm found on the leaflets, namely "Kiefer-Basel" and "Tip-Kia Basel" were unknown in Basle and had obviously been chosen for the purpose of deception.

4. Count Magistrati further alleged that, according to information reaching him, there exists in Munich a National Socialist Students' Society called "Innerkofler",<sup>4</sup> which publishes its information for students by putting it up on the notice-board of the university. Italian students studying in Munich, who had made enquiries about the student society, had been astonished to be told that "Innerkofler" was South Tyrolean. Count Magistrati contented himself with drawing attention to this, and did not make a request for the name to be changed.

5. With reference to Dr. Friedrich Lange's language maps Count Magistrati repeated the request, already submitted in writing (Pol. IV 2182),<sup>5</sup> that the number of German-speaking inhabitants of the South Tyrol printed on the maps be changed. On the language map he had placed before us, the number of German-speaking persons in South Tyrol is given as 270,000, whereas Magistrati himself estimates the number at about 200,000. I explained to him that we had got into touch with the competent home authorities<sup>6</sup> about this, and, as soon as we had a statement from them, we would communicate with him further.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7884/E570852). On Jan. 20, 1939 the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle requested the Gestapo to take steps to stop the sale of the gramophone record about which Magistrati had complained to the Foreign Ministry. On Feb. 20 Heinburg wrote to Magistrati (not printed, 7884/E570853) stating that this had been done.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7885/E570876-79). The leaflet attacked administrative methods in the South Tyrol and emphasized that the oppression of the German element was not in keeping with Italy's demands for the application of the principle of nationality in Tunis and elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> The name of a Tyrolean preacher and author.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (7884/E570856).

<sup>6</sup> In a letter of Mar. 31 (not printed, 7884/E570857-58) Heinburg drew the attention of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle to the fact that the figures for the German-speaking inhabitants in the former South Tyrol given on Dr. Friedrich Lange's linguistic maps were not in accordance with the actual facts of the case and he therefore suggested that the figures be omitted.

After these particular requests and complaints Count Magistrati turned to the fundamental aspect of the South Tyrol question. The natural geographical frontier on the Brenner unfortunately did not coincide with the ethnographical frontier. The South Tyrolese looked upon themselves as German and could not be pacified as long as they belonged to Italy. Although at the moment the situation in South Tyrol was not disquieting, nevertheless at any time incidents might occur which would place the heaviest burden on the Axis. Above all friction might occur between the old-established South Tyrolese and the newly settled Italians, the more so as the Italian Government were still intending to bring into the South Tyrol as large a number of Italians as possible. Therefore a radical solution of the South Tyrol problem must be considered. In his view the only solution would be the resettlement of all the South Tyrolese in Germany. He thought the present time was particularly favourable for this. At the head of Germany and Italy stood two men, bound by the closest ties of friendship and whose authority was so great that such a resettlement could be effected without difficulty. Besides, since the reunion of Austria with the Reich there were now in Germany supplies of frozen Lire amounting to several thousand millions out of which, on a clearing basis, sums could be placed at the disposal of the South Tyrolese to be resettled in Germany as compensation for property left behind by them. It would be difficult for the Duce to submit such a plan to the Führer, as the South Tyrolese were Italian nationals, but Mussolini would gladly agree to such a plan were the Führer to propose it to him.

I maintained a completely receptive attitude to these general observations of Count Magistrati's.<sup>7</sup>

HEINBURG<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note here in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Rightly so".

<sup>8</sup> A marginal note on the cover sheet (not printed, 7794/E566003) to this document indicates that Ribbentrop saw it on Apr. 18.

## No. 164

2184/472057-53

### *The Minister in Albania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 14 of April 5

TIRANA, April 6, 1939—2:50 a.m.

Received April 6—8:40 a.m.

Pol. IV 2395.

The Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> described the situation as follows: The Italians had often expressed doubts as to whether Albania on her side would

<sup>1</sup> Ekrem Bey Libohova.

fulfil her alliance obligations. From the Albanian side everything had been done to dispel suspicion. Finally the Italians had proposed to make the alliance closer, which Albania was in principle ready to do. The Italian oral proposals had, however, been unacceptable because they violated the independence of Albania. Thereupon the Italians had formulated rather less far-reaching proposals in writing but these too were unacceptable. Mussolini was suddenly pursuing the matter with great urgency and had requested a reply by tomorrow. This would be given in the course of the night to the Italian Minister<sup>2</sup> who would take it personally to Rome tomorrow. In the meantime the Italian Consul in Valona had spread the rumour that Italian warships with troops were on the way to Albania. A rumour had reached here from Bari that troops were concentrated there destined for Albania. These reports caused great excitement among the people and there had been demonstrations but no Italian had been harmed. The Minister expressed the hope that the Albanian reply would satisfy the Italians. The Albanians had gone to the utmost limits of what was tolerable for their independence. The Albanians would meet with armed resistance any violent invasion by the Italians. The Italian Minister maintained that Italians had been murdered, wounded, threatened and insulted. Therefore all Italians were being evacuated from Albania today and tomorrow. The Albanians furthermore had mobilized. When I asked what Italy would do if Albania replied to the Italian terms with counter proposals, he answered that Rome would probably regard this as a rejection. With regard to the attitude of other Powers in the event of a possible invasion by Italy, he referred to the Croatian difficulties of the Yugoslavs and to the "understanding" article in *The Times* "Italy and Albania".<sup>3</sup>

It is my impression that the Italians have deliberately brought about the existing conflict in order to establish a protectorate over Albania. They have obviously not been successful in precipitating incidents. So far I have not been able to ascertain that one Italian has been murdered or wounded anywhere. The Albanians are said to have 15,000 men under arms instead of the normal 5,000 to 6,000. Mobilization began on the occasion of the Giro affair<sup>4</sup> after which the Italians offered the King help which he refused. Public feeling against the Italians has turned to hatred. Valona and Durazzo are said to have

<sup>2</sup> Francesco Jacomoni di San Savino.

<sup>3</sup> *The Times* on Apr. 4 had printed a despatch from their Rome correspondent reviewing possible Italian intentions towards Albania.

<sup>4</sup> According to a previous report by Pannwitz, No. 181 of Feb. 28 (2184/472051-54), Giro, an influential member of the Fascist Party, had been sent to Albania, at the request of the Albanian authorities, as adviser on the training of youth. He had formed youth organizations on the Italian Fascist pattern and also meddled in local politics. This had culminated in his expulsion from the country.

been evacuated by Albanian troops and these to have taken up better positions further inland.<sup>5</sup>

PANNWITZ

<sup>5</sup> In a memorandum of Apr. 5 (not printed, 116/66204) Woermann recorded that the Albanian Minister enquired on behalf of his Government how Germany would react if Italy were to land troops in Albania. Woermann replied that, as he must be aware, Germany had no interest in the Adriatic and that a German intervention against Italy was out of the question.

## No. 165

1975/438365

### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 103 of April 6

BUDAPEST, April 6, 1939—6:14 p.m.

Received April 6—10:55 p.m.

Pol. IV 2416.

The Foreign Minister invited me to call on him to inform me he had just told the Rumanian Minister<sup>1</sup> that reports in the British press that parts of Rumanian territory were to be returned to Hungary owing to pressure from Britain were nonsense, as were British press reports of an imminent attack on Rumania by Hungary. When the Rumanian Minister again referred to the putting into effect of the Bled Agreement<sup>2</sup> he replied that this was out of the question. He was, however, willing to negotiate a completely fresh agreement, which must, above all, include provisions for the protection of minorities.

Csáky then handed the Rumanian Minister a Note, the second paragraph of which is identical with the second paragraph of the text reported in my telegram No. 101.<sup>3</sup>

First paragraph, however, now reads:<sup>4</sup>

"Mr. Minister,

I have the honour to state to you that the Hungarian Government, from the start of the military operations in Karpatalja (former Sub-Carpathian Russia) have ordered their troops to respect the whole Rumanian frontier as scrupulously as has been done in the past."<sup>5</sup>

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Raoul Bossy.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 135.

<sup>3</sup> Of Apr. 5 (not printed, 1975/438363-64). The second paragraph reads: "With regard to questions which might arise as a result of the new frontier line, the Hungarian Government are ready to negotiate with the Rumanian Government, through diplomatic channels, in the most conciliatory spirit with the hope of achieving a more perfect understanding between the two nations."

<sup>4</sup> As previously reported, this passage had read: "That the Hungarian Government would respect the Rumanian frontier as scrupulously as by [sic] the past." The full text of the Note was sent by Erdmannsdorff in report A 144 of Apr. 6 (not printed, 5985/E440375-76).

<sup>5</sup> This passage is in French in the original.

## No. 166

2184/472060

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Albania*

## Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, April 6, 1939—9:45 p.m.

No. 19

[zu] Pol. IV 2402.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 15.<sup>1</sup>

Should the occasion arise we agree to take over the Italian interests on the request of the Italian representative.

Beyond this, please observe complete reticence. You will not undertake any action, or make any gesture whatsoever which might cast doubts upon our unqualified approval of the Italian action.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> This telegram of Apr. 6 (2184/472059) reads: "The Italian Minister told me that the Albanian counter proposals did not satisfy Rome and that he would receive a final answer at 6 p.m. today.

"He asked me whether, if diplomatic relations were broken off, I would be prepared to take over Italian interests in Albania. I stated my willingness to do so. Pannwitz."

## No. 167

1818/415238-37

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P. 24

WARSAW, April 6, 1939.

Received April 7.

Pol. V 3084.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Observations by *Chef de Cabinet* Count Lubienski regarding London.

Count Lubienski, *Chef de Cabinet* to the Foreign Minister, invited a member of the Embassy to call on him today in order to communicate the views of the Polish Government regarding the resumption of the discussions on minorities.<sup>1</sup> I am reporting on this separately.<sup>2</sup>

This communication was clearly only a pretext for further observations, which were probably based on instructions from Foreign Minister Beck. Count Lubienski spoke somewhat as follows: the campaign against Poland, which has been waged by the DNB in the foreign press, and which was carried out by means of partly true, but also partly

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 125.

<sup>2</sup> This report of Apr. 8 (not printed, 1836/419041) stated that Lubienski had declared the Polish Government to be agreeable to a resumption of the negotiations at the end of May or beginning of June.

distorted and tendentiously collected facts, was the real reason why foreign countries had feared that a direct attack on Poland was imminent. This anxiety had then led to the attempts to make pacts which were to protect Poland from an attack. Despite the pressure being simultaneously exerted by Germany in the Danzig question, Foreign Minister Beck had rejected these British and French proposals for a pact and had adhered strictly to the bilateral principle. If M. Beck had acquiesced at all in the British guarantee declaration<sup>3</sup> it was as a direct result of Germany's attempt to create in Poland a state of anxiety by means of pressure—in any case a method which could never be successfully used against Poland and especially not in the present circumstances. By his intransigent stand on the Danzig question Foreign Minister Beck had saved German-Polish relations, for if he had accepted the German proposal he would have been forced to resign. Such a development would without doubt have started a definite anti-German policy in Poland, which might even have led in the end to an alliance with the Soviet Union. It was difficult to pursue a policy against the general current of opinion, and Marshal Pilsudski had also encountered this difficulty at the time when he had worked for an understanding with Germany. A great deal of patience was required to bring such a policy to fruition. But if one allowed oneself to be drawn away from broad principles there was the risk that the supreme objective would be called in question. The Polish Government still had a genuine desire for a sincere policy of understanding with Germany, but without the use of pressure and by maintaining the independence of both countries. In speaking today of an encirclement directed against Germany, it should surely also be remembered how much Poland had been encircled by Germany through recent political events.

V. MOLTKE

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 136.

## No. 168

2130/465335

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET  
G 110

BELGRADE, April 6, 1939.  
W 529 g.

With reference to your despatch of March 21, 1939 W 421 g.<sup>1</sup>

According to reports here the negotiations on the credit of half a

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2130/465333). In this despatch Moraht asked for a report on the Italian offer of a credit of half a milliard Lire to finance Yugoslav State contracts. Italy was said to have received orders for 2 cm anti-aircraft guns and a small number of aircraft. A copy of this despatch was forwarded to Rome with a cover note of Mar. 25 (not printed, 2130/465332).



milliard Lire previously offered by Italy for financing Yugoslav State contracts have not yet been concluded.

The difficulty is said to lie in the question of the period of repayment. The Italians are said to have agreed to extend the repayment period of four years, originally envisaged by them, to five years, but the Yugoslavs continue to demand a ten-year period. About two-thirds of the credit would be used for war material and about one-third for other purchases, including signals equipment for the Yugoslav railways.

The result of the present negotiations on the granting of the credit cannot yet be gauged, but opinion tends to be that the agreement will be concluded.

A further enquiry to Consul General Neuhausen shows that his information tallies in the main with that of the Legation.<sup>2</sup>

VON HEEREN

<sup>2</sup> A copy of this report was forwarded to Rome by Moraht with a cover note of Apr. 14 (2130/465334). Moraht added: "It has meanwhile transpired that we are in competition with the Italians for part of the total of 200 bomber aircraft and for the 7.5 cm anti-aircraft guns. But we will, on our side, ensure that the competition is kept within the limits prescribed by our political relations with Italy." A handwritten marginal note on this cover note reads: "Neuhausen has told me about this in detail. M[ackensen] 18/4."

## No. 169

52/34632-34

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

St.S. No. 316

BERLIN, April 6, 1939.

I invited the Polish Ambassador to call upon me today and in the course of our conversation he of his own accord introduced the subject of Beck's conversations in London.<sup>2</sup> Lipski maintained that, though he had no detailed information, he could make certain basic principles clear to me:

- 1) Poland wished to abide by the 1934 Agreement.
- 2) The Polish-British Agreements were bilateral and purely defensive; there was no question of Poland joining a bloc.

I received these remarks of Lipski's with a smile and answered somewhat as follows: the most recent trend of Polish policy was now altogether incomprehensible to me. Lipski knew as well as I did how strained had been our relations before the seizure of power.<sup>3</sup> No one in Germany, except the Führer, could have had the great conception of 1934 and have realized it *vis-à-vis* Poland. From that time our

<sup>1</sup> For Lipski's account of this conversation, see the *Polish White Book*, No. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Beck visited London Apr. 3-7, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., by Hitler in 1933.

relations had undergone a constant and gratifying improvement. On the basis of these good-neighbourly relations the Führer had, as he knew, initiated conversations with Poland at the beginning of 1939 and had tried not only to settle the remaining points of difference between us, but also to give Poland a generous guarantee for the Corridor frontier. Poland had obviously not understood this offer. Instead of its being gladly taken, and the work of 1934 completed, we had suddenly heard strange sabre-rattling in Poland. Though this had not disturbed us, it was in strange contrast to the response which we were entitled to expect from Warsaw. The Führer's offer to Poland was one which would not be repeated. The kind of answer to the offer which the Polish Government had wished to give us had, as we knew, been characterized to him—Lipski—by the Reich Foreign Minister, on March 27<sup>4</sup>, as representing no basis for the settlement of the question at issue. (Later in the course of the conversation I repeated that the Polish answer was for us no basis for discussion.) The future would, of course, show whether Poland had been well advised in her attitude. I went on to say that I had not yet read the statement which it was announced Chamberlain would make in the House of Commons this afternoon.<sup>5</sup> But if what was already appearing in the press about Beck's conversations was true, then I did not know how the Polish attitude could still be reconciled with the spirit of the 1934 Agreement.

Lipski tried to argue on this last point that the Polish-French Treaty relationship had after all been compatible with the 1934 Agreement (!) Lipski at the same time represented Polish troop concentrations in the neighbourhood of Danzig as an understandable action, parallel with troop movements taking place in other countries—such as Hungary, Rumania and even Norway. Above all, however, Lipski maintained that, at the time of the German entry into Czecho-Slovakia, we had remained entirely out of touch with him, as a result of which, in contrast to last September, an understandable Polish nervousness had developed. Polish fears had been correspondingly increased by the German ultimatum addressed to Lithuania.<sup>6</sup>

I cut Lipski short immediately he mentioned an "ultimatum" to Lithuania, ridiculed his observations on troop movements of other countries—which were never directed against Poland—and told him I would have understood if he, Lipski, had now thanked us for having put no obstacle in the way of Warsaw's ardent desire for a common

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 108.

<sup>5</sup> For the text of this statement see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, cols. 2996-7. In it, the Prime Minister gave the terms of the Anglo-Polish communiqué of Apr. 6, whereby the unilateral British assurance to Poland (see document No. 136) was supplemented by a corresponding Polish assurance to Britain and provision made for the conclusion of a permanent and reciprocal agreement.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 80.

Hungarian-Polish frontier. In short, I loftily and indifferently refuted Lipski's statements with the relevant arguments, whereupon we parted.<sup>7</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>7</sup> A further memorandum by Weizsäcker, St.S. No. 320 of Apr. 7 (52/34635), reads: "For the sake of completeness it should be added to memorandum No. 316 of Apr. 6 (conversation with Ambassador Lipski) that Lipski characterized our action in Czecho-Slovakia as a threat to Poland. I replied that, as he knew, the Polish Government had been told that Slovakia might also be discussed within the framework of the general settlement [*Gesamtvereinigung*] envisaged."

## No. 170

623/250988

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 317

BERLIN, April 6, 1939.

The Italian Ambassador telephoned me this evening to inform me that developments between Rome and Tirana had reached a stage which made military intervention necessary. Count Ciano had instructed him to inform the Reich Foreign Minister that Italian troops would land on the Albanian coast on Friday, April 7, at 4:30 a.m. The country was to be occupied; Attolico could give no further details of Albania's future political status. Attolico thought that he could give an assurance on behalf of Rome that any objections on the part of Yugoslavia would be dispelled by direct approach in Belgrade. This would be all the easier to achieve the more unrestrictedly the German press supported Italy's action.

On the last point I promised Attolico our full support.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 171

2184/472093-84

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 127 of April 6

ROME, April 7, 1939—1:15 a.m.

Received April 7—3:00 a.m.

Pol. IV 2472.

In accordance with your instructions by telegram No. 162 of April 5,<sup>1</sup> I made a statement to Count Ciano, who had asked me to come and see him this evening at 9 p.m., which obviously pleased him and which he acknowledged by asking me to convey his most heartfelt thanks to the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 158.

Reich Foreign Minister. He valued this statement all the more because he had asked me to come and see him to inform me that the situation in Albania had been so exacerbated that Italy would land large bodies of troops at 4:30 a.m. tomorrow morning, at San Giovanni di Medua in the northern part of the country, which in any case was hostile to the King, as well as at Durazzo, Valona and Santi Quaranta. 300 aircraft would accompany the landing manoeuvre, a further 200 were standing ready. All Italians had already been evacuated but, in view of the latest reports, there was the gravest anxiety about the Legation staff, which had of course remained there. Another despairing telegram had just been received saying that the Legation was completely surrounded by gangs. He, Ciano, would himself go to Albania tomorrow morning at 5 a.m. in his own aircraft, but would probably return here in the course of the day. The King had completely lost his senses and was pushing things to extremes. Outwardly the military occupation would be represented as having a time limit, while, naturally, leaving open the question of how the situation would actually develop later, and what decision Italy would have to take. Outwardly sovereignty was to be maintained, it had not yet been decided in what way. The word "personal union" was mentioned, and—in contrast to recent conversations<sup>2</sup>—the word "protectorate".

During his visit to Belgrade in January,<sup>3</sup> he had already pointed out the possibility of the development which would take place today and had informed the [Yugoslav] Minister here during the last few days. He said, however, that he would this evening show the Minister a report from the Italian Minister in Tirana, about twelve days old, in which the latter stated that, in demanding Italian troops, as mentioned in my previous telegram No. 117,<sup>4</sup> the King was planning a joint action against Yugoslavia by invading as far as Nish, giving as the reason for this his mission as the "Hitler of the Balkans", who was called upon to organize the Balkans on the model of the order created by the Führer in Central Europe—ideas which Ciano characterized as a touch of megalomania. This report would certainly make an impression in Belgrade and help to create understanding for Italy's action. Furthermore the Hungarians had very loyally stated their readiness to demonstrate with six mobilized divisions in the event of any more serious unrest in Yugoslavia. Ciano, however, did not seem to expect any unfriendly acts of provocation on the part of Belgrade, if only because of the present internal weakness of the Yugoslav State. A very great deal, he said, of course depended on German public opinion, in particular the press, ranging itself quite clearly on Italy's side from the first moment, and fully representing the justification, and indeed

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 150.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 18–23. See the *Ciano Diaries*, entries on these days.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 150.

the necessity, for Italy's action. He would ask me to lay very special emphasis on this. In reply I said that my initial statement made to him on behalf of the Foreign Minister, in conjunction with the Führer's latest speeches, left me in no doubt that in this hour Italy could unreservedly rely on us.

Immediately after me, Ciano received the Hungarian Minister.

MACKENSEN

## No. 172

2134/472065-66

### *Circular of the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, April 7, 1939—1:25 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. IV 2409.

For confidential information.

The Italian military action which began this morning against Albania is the result of serious differences between Rome and Tirana. Its immediate aim is the occupation of the country for a limited time; further action has presumably not yet been determined.

This action has our complete approval and will be wholeheartedly supported by us in the press, on the radio, etc.

The Italian Government are endeavouring to spare Yugoslavia's understandably sensitive feelings and, indeed, as a result of an exchange of ideas with Belgrade, they feel that they have good prospects of success, so that no difficulties of any importance are to be expected from that quarter.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the principal Missions in Europe, except Rome, and those at Tokyo and Washington.

## No. 173

1625/358465-66

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 167 of April 7

BUCHAREST, April 7, 1939—4:00 p.m.

Received April 7—9:30 p.m.

Pol. II 1126.

Foreign Minister Gafencu told me he had received the following information from M. Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, explaining his new attitude in the matter of the mutual assistance pact between Poland and Britain:

1) Poland was a Great Power and therefore could not place herself under the protection of other Powers. For that reason Britain's unilateral promise of protection must be replaced by a reciprocal agreement.

2) A reciprocal agreement would avoid the system of collective security, which Germany might consider as directed against herself.

3) Poland wished to take no action in association with Soviet Russia. She therefore stood for a system of bilateral agreements. When G[afencu] wanted to know my opinion, I evaded the question by referring to the Führer's speech at Wilhelmshaven<sup>1</sup> against the encirclement policy and observed that in my opinion Beck had nevertheless succumbed to the enticements of British statesmen, but that it was impossible to say anything until the final text of the agreement was known. G[afencu] said he also had noticed this sudden change of attitude on the part of Beck. Rumania's attitude remained unchanged, namely:

No reciprocal agreements; should Britain and France, however, want to give Rumania a unilateral guarantee, he could not evade it. When he asked my opinion I replied that Rumania must avoid anything which might give support to British propaganda directed against Germany; there was probably nothing more behind the Anglo-French declaration. G[afencu] remarked: "Yes, a German declaration of that kind would be of more use to me." In conclusion he again emphasized that he was not participating in any kind of encirclement policy and would not attach himself to any grouping of States directed against one another.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>1</sup> On Apr. 1. See Editors' Note on p. 183.

## No. 174

5209/E308964

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

URGENT  
St.S. No. 318

BERLIN, April 7, 1939.

This morning the Italian Ambassador addressed an urgent appeal to me, asserting that Italy was no longer receiving any coal from Germany. He then modified this remark by saying that we were falling short of our promises. In a further conversation he said that deliveries were showing a tendency to fall off. I told Attolico that, as he knew, I was doing my utmost in this matter and had recently spoken about it to Reich Minister Funk on the telephone.<sup>1</sup> However, in order to lend

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 62.

weight to his request, I would like to have figures; these Attolico was not in a position to give. He will accordingly procure them.

At the same time I contacted the Economic Policy Department in order to ascertain our figures. Without these a mere general reminder, however urgent, would of course fizzle out at the Ministry of Economics.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 175

5209/E308030-31

*The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to  
the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 175

BERLIN, April 8, 1939—4:40 p.m.  
zu W III 2737.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 126.<sup>1</sup>

The steady increase, of which you are aware, of coal exports from January to March will be maintained in April also, as the Italians have already been promised. In April we hope to reach a total of 700,000 tons. The temporary fall in loading figures during the first few days of April is due to the fact that, during the first few days of every month, obligations for regular orders with fixed delivery dates must be met. In addition, indispensable supplies to German blast-furnaces for the Easter holidays caused an unusual strain, particularly over coking coal.

In order to satisfy Italy's urgent demand for an immediate increase in deliveries, a special increase in consignments on account of later deliveries will be made as from April 11. Already today, Saturday, by ruthlessly ignoring other demands, 17,500 tons, instead of the usual daily load of 3,500, have been consigned by rail, despite the particularly difficult conditions of half a working day between two holidays. We would even have loaded 20,500 if the Italian Monopoly<sup>2</sup> itself had not preferred to have 3,000 tons sent by sea.

Attolico, who made a similar request, has been informed accordingly and showed his satisfaction. But please also inform Ciano direct, emphasizing that a five-fold load today, improvised in 24 hours, really represents a special feat of organization.

CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> In this telegram of Apr. 6 (5209/E308029), Mackensen reported: "On instructions from Ciano, Giannini urgently requested me to use my influence with the Reich Government in order that the consignment of coal, especially of coking coal, which had dropped still further, should be stepped up immediately. The position of coal supplies here was disquieting. Industrial establishments and gas works were on the point of closing down. For political and economic reasons prompt German measures and the despatch of satisfactory increases are requested." [The rest of the telegram is corrupt.]

<sup>2</sup> The State-owned company Azienda Carboni Italiani.

## No. 176

5570/E396833

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 101 of April 10

BELGRADE, April 10, 1939—5:10 p.m.

Received April 10—9:45 p.m.

W 528 g.

For the Reich Ministry for Air.

When the Credit Agreement<sup>1</sup> is completed, the orders to be expected for the Air Force consist, for the time being, apart from ground equipment, of 50 Me. 109's and 50 Do. 215's, plus spare parts.

On April 8, I had a conversation with General Janković, who told me that an order for 100 bomber aircraft was only possible if 50 could be delivered in June, July and August.<sup>2</sup> Janković suggested that these 50 should be drawn from new stocks intended for the German Luftwaffe. The Air Force here is prepared to buy these bombers with the same equipment and so to commit themselves to using German weapons and bombs. Only Dornier type, perhaps with Bramo<sup>3</sup>, will do.

The reasons for this early requirement are said to lie in domestic policy.

This demand gives us the chance of strengthening and exploiting our military influence here.<sup>4</sup>

HEEREN

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 142.

<sup>2</sup> A marginal note in Clodius' handwriting on another copy (3053/601259) reads: "Out of the question."

<sup>3</sup> Aero engines produced by the Brandenburgische Motorenwerke.

<sup>4</sup> A marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting on another copy (3053/601259) indicates that this telegram was referred to Wiehl.

## No. 177

621/250760-61

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1471

PARIS, April 10, 1939.

Received April 12

Pol. II 1137.

Subject: Statements on the political situation by the French Minister of Marine, Campinchi.

A few days ago the French Minister of Marine, Campinchi, expressed his views on the political situation very frankly, to a source which I know to be reliable. They were reported to me as follows:



"Germany's treatment of Czecho-Slovakia," Campinchi had said, "proves that the Führer is committed to a policy from which he can no longer turn back." Further ultimata and further acts of occupation would therefore doubtless be attempted. But even if one admitted that the Führer intended to rest satisfied with the present situation, that would be no argument in favour of the maintenance of peace. As a result of Germany's policy, especially the elimination of Czecho-Slovakia, Europe had been thrown so much out of balance that German hegemony had come threateningly near. For Europe, therefore, there was now only the alternative of accepting such German hegemony without demur or resisting it. Britain and France were ready and determined to do the latter. These were the reasons why he, Campinchi, had for some weeks considered war to be inevitable.

He knew that Germany was not afraid of war, especially because she thought she could bring it to a victorious end in a very short time with her superior Luftwaffe. This view was a dangerous illusion. Germany today was weaker than on the eve of the World War and she would have as her opponents, not only the nations of Europe, but the whole world with the sole exception of Italy and Japan. The result of the war would therefore undoubtedly be the defeat of Germany. In that case a peace would be imposed upon her, in comparison with which the Peace of Versailles would be as nothing. The peace treaty which ended the next war must be on the pattern of the Peace of Westphalia, i.e. it must completely dismember the Reich and split it up into its component parts. Only then could there be any hope of peace for a relatively long period.

It was often imagined that leading military circles in France shrank from war. This view was false. During the September crisis he, Campinchi, had been in constant touch with General Gamelin and he could give an assurance that the latter had pronounced himself in the strongest terms against the surrender of Czecho-Slovakia. Only recently there had been another conference between the Defence Ministers and representatives of the General Staff, at which General Gamelin had again made no secret of his views. Gamelin was of the opinion that France's strategic and military position, whatever the losses it had suffered recently, left no doubt as to a successful outcome of a war.

It is well known that from the first M. Campinchi has been one of those who adopted a sharp tone in the French Cabinet, but who have not been able to carry their point at the decisive moment, or who have fallen from power. In spite of this, his remarks seem to me to be of interest, all the more so as I have reason to assume that he was counting on their being passed on to me. They typify the fact that the atmosphere here is largely dominated by the thought of war, which is held to be inevitable. The Government programme, as also revealed in the

emergency regulations,<sup>1</sup> subordinates everything to national defence and the increase of armaments, and, both in Parliament and among the people, no objection has been raised to this since the events of March in Czecho-Slovakia, as was the case during the September crisis. A sign of weakness, however—a point which Campinchi did not mention—is the wide-spread view that, before a clash of arms with the authoritarian States, France must be more strongly armed and must therefore increase her efforts in that direction.

BRÄUER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 22, footnote 2.

## No. 178

100/64455-56

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, April 11, 1939—4:40 a.m.

No. 176 of April 11

Received April 11—8:00 a.m.

For the Ambassador personally.

For Field Marshal Göring.<sup>1</sup>

I learn that you are going to Rome on an *official* visit lasting several days from April 15.<sup>2</sup> As I only learned indirectly of your departure for Italy at the time, I was under the impression that it only involved a private visit. I also gathered from a recent conversation with General Bodenschatz that you would be seeing Mussolini and Count Ciano in Rome, but I did not understand that this was an official State visit. I have therefore so far issued no official notification from the Foreign Ministry to the Italian Government and have not given any special instructions to the Embassy in Rome. The Embassy in Rome has now informed me, on my enquiry, that an official programme for your Rome visit is apparently being arranged with the Italian Government direct, but since you have said nothing to the Foreign Ministry or to Ambassador von Mackensen, the latter was therefore unable to give any authoritative information in answer to enquiries about your visit from the Italian side. The Embassy in Rome is thus placed in a somewhat awkward position *vis-à-vis* the Italians. This is not right and I do not consider that the arranging of an official programme for your visit without the participation of the official Reich Mission, which is responsible for this, is proper. I should be grateful if you would inform

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<sup>1</sup> This telegram was forwarded to Tripoli (see enclosure to document No. 252) where Göring had gone from his holiday in San Remo.

<sup>2</sup> Göring visited Rome Apr. 14-16 and had conversations there with Mussolini and Ciano. See documents Nos. 205 and 211.

Ambassador von Mackensen as soon as possible and communicate your wishes for the Rome visit direct. Ambassador von Mackensen has been instructed by me to contact you at once and then make final arrangements for your Rome programme with the Italian Government.

RIBBENTROP

No. 179

2422/511714

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 115 of April 10

WASHINGTON, April 11, 1939—11:31 a.m.

Received April 11—7:30 p.m.

Pol. IX 632.

I. Italian action against Albania has clarified two points here:

1) The attempts hitherto repeatedly made to detach Italy from the Axis were futile. There is therefore no point in repeating them. America has been forced to recognize the fact that the Axis is unshakable.

2) The British attempt at encirclement has been thwarted. All endeavours to force a unilateral British guarantee of independence on the Balkan States, which are disunited among themselves, come too late; British assistance is of problematic value.

Britain's readiness to associate herself with the Polish, the Russian, and the other smaller dictatorships merely to hold Germany in check is not having any effects favourable for Britain on the mood of political circles here. However, the Government and a large part of the press let it be understood that they approve of any means of combating Germany and Italy.

II. After Spain's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact<sup>1</sup> and the further improvement in Europe of the political and strategic position of the totalitarian Powers, it is to be expected that America will transfer to Japan the favours hitherto accorded to Italy, and will attempt, by rousing Japanese distrust of her treaty partners, to weaken the totalitarian ring.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 27, 1939. See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 767 and 768.

## No. 180

1975/438872-74

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*Telegram<sup>1</sup>

MOST URGENT

No. 173 of April 11

BUCHAREST, April 11, 1939—6:35 p.m.

Received April 11—8:20 p.m.

Pol. IV 2506.

With reference to my telegram No. 171 of April 11.<sup>2</sup>

Foreign Minister Gafencu sent for me and said that Csáky's statement, obtained through our mediation, was welcomed with gratitude. In contradiction to this, however, were:

i) The daily attacks by Hungarian radio and press aimed at fomenting the aspirations of the minorities.

ii) The peculiar attitude of the Hungarian Foreign Minister who had [passage corrupt]<sup>3</sup> in the spirit of Bled, had then supplemented the Rumanian counter proposal by amending it,<sup>4</sup> and who now would not make any statement at all beyond that regarding the immediate *coup* ... (group missing).<sup>5</sup>

In view of the present tension in Europe, it was therefore not easy for the Rumanian Government to demobilize, although the Govern-

<sup>1</sup> This telegram, as received in Berlin, was corrupt. Corrections taken from the draft in the Bucharest Legation file (7063/E524153-60) are indicated in footnotes.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5453/E366635). In this telegram Fabricius briefly reported having carried out his instructions with Gafencu. These instructions related to a telegram Fabricius had sent on Apr. 7, No. 169 (1975/438369), in which he reported: "The King has reversed the previous decision to demobilize, because the Hungarians have stopped demobilizing and are provoking frontier incidents. Also, amongst the Hungarian and German minorities in Transylvania and the Banat, the idea is obtaining increasing currency that Hitler is coming. . . (group missing), which gives rise amongst the Rumanians, in both town and country districts, to anti-German feelings, which are visibly growing. Feelings are running so high that incidents have been of frequent occurrence."

"The Minister of the Court, Urdareanu, who spoke of this most emphatically, drew my attention to the dangers inherent in the widespread belief amongst the population, though not the Government, that Germany was behind Hungary. The Government themselves again had the feeling that Hungary was planning a *coup*, against which Rumania must defend herself. In the present situation, mobilization entailed heavy expense daily for both sides, and, as the fields remained untilld, economic losses, which would weigh heavily against the loyal fulfilment of our economic Treaty which Rumania intended."

The Foreign Ministry acted on this report by telephoning enquiries to the Legation in Budapest, who replied in telegram No. 106 on Apr. 8 (not printed, 1975/438370) that Csáky had disclaimed all knowledge of frontier incidents, described the Rumanian assertion about a Hungarian *coup* as "complete nonsense", and stated that Hungarian troops on the Rumanian frontier had been demobilized; further he attributed Rumanian tardiness in demobilization to a desire to exert pressure on Hungary to ratify the Bled Agreement, and was proposing to take counter measures. This reply was repeated to Bucharest by the Foreign Ministry on Apr. 9 in telegram No. 152 (not printed, 7635/E545339-90), with instructions to Fabricius to convey Csáky's *démenti* to the Rumanian Government (an intention of which Csáky was being informed) and to express the German desire to see a speedy *détente* in Rumanian-Hungarian relations, which was likewise being expressed in Budapest.

<sup>3</sup> The Bucharest draft reads: "who had at first proposed making a statement".

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 132 and 165.

<sup>5</sup> The Bucharest draft reads: "which he had made to us".

ment wished to do so, as they desired to continue the policy of *rapprochement* with Germany. He, Gafencu, needed some kind of declaration from Budapest, even though he had told the Hungarian Minister here only yesterday that he did not want one, because he had seen that nothing could be achieved through him. He was now, therefore, confidently appealing to the Reich Foreign Minister and asking him to prevail upon Budapest to make the following declaration, for which Csáky had from time to time indicated his willingness:

"I have the honour to inform you that the Hungarian Government will respect the Hungarian-Rumanian frontier as conscientiously as they have done in the past.

"The Hungarian Government are prepared to negotiate with the Rumanian Government, through diplomatic channels, on any issues arising from the correct<sup>6</sup> frontier demarcation, in the hope of a better understanding between the two countries."

If necessary the first paragraph could also be made reciprocal.

Gafencu told me that he was doing everything possible to prevent Rumania from being involved in the British encirclement policy. For that reason he had even sent Secretary General Cretzianu to London<sup>7</sup> to make his views clear there, as he did not trust Tilea. But he asked us also to support him and strengthen his position so that he could carry through the big economic agreement with us.

I told Gafencu that I thought it would be extremely difficult to obtain a new declaration from the Hungarian Foreign Minister. We had mediated on Saturday when we recognized that, in view of the anti-German feeling among the population, Rumania's<sup>8</sup> demobilization was in our interests. Nevertheless, I would pass on his request for further intervention by the Reich Foreign Minister.

I would like to support this request, as its fulfilment, followed by Rumanian demobilization, would contribute to a considerable easing of the tension in South Eastern Europe, and would strengthen Gafencu's position in the Cabinet and with public opinion. My colleagues, who utilized the Easter holidays to make a tour of Transylvania, have affirmed how difficult the position of the German minority there would become if mobilization continued any longer. Finally, the attitude of Csáky in first making proposals for declarations himself and then completely withdrawing them seems incomprehensible.

FABRICIUS

<sup>6</sup> The Bucharest draft reads "new".

<sup>7</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 37 and 65.

<sup>8</sup> The Bucharest draft here reads "rapid" in place of "Rumanian."

## No. 181

1625/388470-71

*The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 43 of April 11

BERNE, April 11, 1939—9:23 p.m.

Received April 12—1:30 a.m.

Pol. II 1139.

Federal Councillor Motta, who has been ill for weeks with high blood pressure and is still in need of rest, was unable to receive me again until today. He is going on about six weeks' convalescent leave soon.

As to the reasons for the call-up of troops and frontier defence measures under the authorization of the Federal Council of March 24, he assured me that this had not been due to the report put out by the *Agence Fournier*<sup>1</sup> that 700,000 troops had been deployed by us on the Swiss frontier, nor to the attempted *Putsch* in Liechtenstein,<sup>2</sup> nor to Polish partial mobilization, nor to a warning by France or any other Power. The Federal Council had only undertaken such measures as were necessary to restore calm at home, although, as he admitted to me, they had had exactly the opposite effect on the population. Part of the troops called up had been released again and other frontier measures which, he assured me, had been taken uniformly on all frontiers, had for the most part been rescinded.

Concerning the Anglo-French guarantee agreements, Motta told me that, on the day that Bonnet and Lebrun left for London,<sup>3</sup> the Director of the Political Department of the French Foreign Ministry<sup>4</sup> had summoned the Swiss Minister in Paris, Stucki, and had informed him that Britain and France intended jointly to give a promise of guarantee to Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium. Stucki had answered, with perfect correctness, that he took note of the information with thanks but would like at the same time to state that this declaration was not of Switzerland's seeking and that it remained for her to decide the moment at which she might consider it necessary to make use of the guarantee. Motta went on to say that, in the event of a violation of Swiss neutrality, it was indeed a foregone conclusion that the other Powers interested in Swiss neutrality would come to Switzerland's aid and that thus the promise of a guarantee need not have been given. Only today has he informed Minister Frölicher, who is here, of the French Foreign Ministry's statement to Stucki. Proceedings had been instituted on account of the inflammatory report by the *Agence Fournier*

<sup>1</sup> A French News Agency, with headquarters in Paris, and a sub-office in Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 141.

<sup>3</sup> On Mar. 21.

<sup>4</sup> Émile Charvériat.

(cf. my despatch No. 867 of March 29);<sup>5</sup> he himself most strongly disapproved of the report.<sup>6</sup>

KÖCHER

<sup>5</sup> In this report (not printed, 2025/443988-90), Köcher analysed the reasons which had prompted the measures of the Federal Council and the rumours which had suddenly appeared on Mar. 25 and 26: an article in the *Geneva Suisse*, of Mar. 28, pointed out that the Zürich correspondent of the *Agence Fournier* had originated the report that 700,000 German troops were stationed in Vorarlberg, a report which had at once found its way into the Paris edition of the *Daily Mail* and was repeated on Strasbourg radio on Mar. 26.

<sup>6</sup> A copy of this telegram was sent for information to the Missions in Europe in a circular of Apr. 26 (not printed, 1625/388472-73), with the addition of the comment that Stucki's statement, that it was for Switzerland to decide the moment at which she thought she must make use of this guarantee, could not be regarded as correct.

## No. 182

1625/388492-93

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 114 of April 11

LONDON, April 11, 1939.

Received April 12—11:30 a.m.

Pol. IV 2521.

The conversation with the Italian Chargé d'Affaires,<sup>1</sup> on which I am sending a detailed memorandum,<sup>2</sup> yielded the following facts for assessing the situation created by Italy's occupation of Albania:

Already last week the Italian Government had initiated their action by a statement to Britain that they regarded Albania as an exclusively Italian sphere of interest.<sup>3</sup> The British Government replied that they recognized Italy's predominant influence in accordance with the 1921 resolutions,<sup>4</sup> but must protest against the claim to exclusive interest. Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons that Britain had no direct interests in Albania, but was only interested in Albania insofar as a threat to peace was concerned,<sup>5</sup> induced Mussolini to send a personal message to Chamberlain.<sup>6</sup> In this message Mussolini refers to Chamberlain's statements and says:

1) that Italy's action in Albania does not affect the Anglo-Italian Agreement,<sup>7</sup> and

2) that there is no factor in this action which justifies Britain's anxiety about the maintenance of peace.

<sup>1</sup> G. Crolla.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2184/472093-98).

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 88.

<sup>4</sup> The Declaration by Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan regarding the integrity of the frontiers of Albania, signed at Paris, Nov. 9, 1921. See *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 117, pp. 452-53.

<sup>5</sup> See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, col. 2995.

<sup>6</sup> For the text of this message see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 83.

<sup>7</sup> Of Apr. 16, 1938, brought into force on Nov. 16, 1938. See *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 142, pp. 147-156, see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iii, chapter vi.

In the course of the exchanges Italy made two statements to the British Government:<sup>8</sup>

1) that the withdrawal of volunteers from Spain would take place in accordance with the Anglo-Italian Agreement immediately after the big Madrid parade,<sup>9</sup> and

2) that Italy had no intention of occupying Corfu or of attacking Greece.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires added that it had been all the easier for his Government to make these statements because, in any case, they had previously agreed with Franco that the Italian volunteers would leave Spain after the big parade and because, even before the occupation of Albania, they had told the Greek Government of their own accord that they would respect the territorial status of Greece including the islands (*statut territorial et insulaire*).

Lord Halifax had been very pleased about both statements and had asked the Italian Government's consent to his making use of them in Thursday's session of the House of Commons.<sup>10</sup> Mussolini had agreed to this.

Halifax told the Italian Chargé d'Affaires that in the forthcoming session of the House of Commons the British Government would try to subdue the excitement of British public opinion, which is undoubtedly considerable. They would of course be obliged to use sharp words against Italy's action; but Italy must have patience, Britain wanted to maintain the relations based on the Anglo-Italian Agreement "in the interests of European peace". In conclusion Halifax had used the simile: "although the window panes are shattered, the bridge is still intact".

TH. KORDT

<sup>8</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 110.

<sup>9</sup> The Victory Parade, which took place on May 19, 1939.

<sup>10</sup> i.e., on Apr. 13.

## No. 183

6519/E487260-64

### *The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

B 1171

LONDON, April 11, 1939.

Received April 12.

W VI 1352.

Subject: Results of the visit of the Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade to Warsaw, Moscow, Helsinki and Stockholm.

With reference to my report B 1086 of April 3, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. R. S. Hudson, Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, returned to London on April 4 from his round trip to Warsaw, Moscow, Helsinki and Stockholm.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5461/E366678).



The Embassy learns in strict confidence from a member of Hudson's party that the talks which he had in the various capitals produced no concrete results. Nevertheless it was agreed that Russian, Finnish and Swedish trade delegations would come to London in the near future. With the exception of the Russian delegation these will be composed of economic and industrial representatives from the countries in question, so that probably only in the case of Russia can talks on a new trade agreement be expected. In the case of the Swedish and Finnish delegations every effort will naturally be made by the British Government and by British industry to represent Great Britain both as a potential buyer and seller, in order at least in this informal way to place trade relations with these countries on a better foundation, in the hope that the relations initiated by Mr. Hudson may thereby be permanently strengthened and developed. Even if, in order to achieve this aim, the British Government are prepared to put the state credit machinery of the Export Credit Guarantee Department into action to a large extent, the lack of understanding so far shown by British manufacturers for the requirements of these countries and the high price of British goods, together with a sales organization to some extent badly neglected in the countries mentioned, might prove a considerable obstacle to the comprehensive development of mutual economic relations which is earnestly desired. There is therefore no need to attach too much significance to the Finnish and Swedish trade visits, although it is probably worth while following their course and their results, in order to recognize in time the starting points for possible counter action.

Worthy of more serious consideration are the negotiations for the conclusion of a new trade agreement, which are to take place here soon, between the Russian Governmental Delegation and the British Government. In spite of the scanty information given by the British press on Hudson's conversations on the subject in Moscow, it seems certain, according to statements by my informant, that during Hudson's stay in Moscow all disputed points in Anglo-Russian economic relations were discussed in very great detail and that, at that time, agreement in principle was already reached on the more important questions at issue.<sup>2</sup> This is all the more likely because the desire for a change in political relations with the Soviet Union provided an opportunity of showing the goodwill of the British Government in the economic field, while on the other hand Russia was also afforded more scope for making concessions in view of the existing state of Anglo-Russian economic relations. According to my informant, all authoritative circles in Russia regard Britain's attempts at *rapprochement* with the greatest scepticism, which Britain hopes to surmount, at least in part, by suitable treatment in the economic field. The resistance formerly

<sup>2</sup> See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, Nos. 305, 519, 531, 533 for Hudson's reports on his talks in Moscow.

put up by British public opinion to far-reaching cooperation with Russia can be considered as having been almost overcome as a result of the latest trend of feeling here. The previous report under reference<sup>3</sup> already gave in detail the questions to be dealt with at the Anglo-Russian economic negotiations. It is beyond doubt that over and above this the British Government are prepared not only to pass over completely the question of Russia's pre-war debts, but also to invest new funds in Russian trade and industry by means of credits. In this connection it may be mentioned that rumours have been circulating here for some time that Britain is anxious to link up the Russian railway system in Turkestan with the railway system in British India (Peshawar), a project which assumes additional significance in the present circumstances. It has so far not been possible to establish how far negotiations about this are actually pending.

Comparatively little had been made public about the Anglo-Polish economic negotiations in connection with Hudson's visit to Warsaw, and Beck's visit to London.<sup>4</sup> It is certain that Beck's staff did not include an economic expert and that his stay in London did not lead to the transaction of a credit or a loan. Both in the Government and in the City Poland was expected to receive a considerable loan, as this question had already been one of the subjects of Hudson's talks in Warsaw. The sum mentioned then varied between 20 and 25 million pounds. It is also a fact that, in view of the political situation, British banks, which so far have mainly financed Polish trade and industry (as for example Kleinwort) refuse to allow Poland further credits without a guarantee from the Treasury. Beck is therefore said not to have attempted to make contact with City circles. I also hear in confidence that the Polish Government intend to set up a new industrial centre in south-eastern Poland, which is later to form the backbone of the Polish armaments industry. The Polish Government are seeking loans and delivery credits mainly for the financing of this enterprise. The British Government are keenly interested in this project and want British industry to take a share in developing the enterprise. It seems that Hudson's moderate optimism with regard to his talks in Warsaw is primarily based on this. However, it will probably depend, in the main, on the further development of political relations between Poland and Great Britain, which are not [*sic* ? now] under discussion here, whether and to what extent British participation in this project has any prospect of success.

By order:  
WEBER

<sup>3</sup> The report cited in footnote 1 is not relevant here; it does, however, refer to report B 693 of Mar. 6 (not printed, 5841/E425700-03) which is presumably meant. In it Kordt reported "from a reliable official source" that Hudson's instructions were to test Russian readiness to revise the existing trade treaty.

<sup>4</sup> Hudson arrived in Warsaw on Mar. 19, 1939, and left for Moscow on Mar. 23. Beck visited London from Apr. 3-7.

## No. 184

52/34635

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, April 11, 1939.

On April 10 the Intelligence Department [Abt. Abwehr] of the High Command of the Wehrmacht gave the following general assessment of the present military situation in Poland:

"Poland is safeguarding the crucial area of the Corridor against any surprise attacks by maintaining troops on the frontier in a continuous state of alert."

VON NOSTITZ

## No. 185

Nuremberg document 120-C  
Exhibit GB-41

*Directive by the Führer*

TOP SECRET MILITARY  
BY OFFICER ONLY

BERLIN, April 11, 1939.

5 copies  
2nd copy

OKW No.37/39 g. Kdos. Chefs. WFA/L I

Subject: Directive for the uniform preparation of war by the Wehrmacht for 1939/40.

I shall lay down in a later directive the future tasks of the Wehrmacht and the preparations to be made in accordance with these for the conduct of war. Until that directive comes into force the Wehrmacht must be prepared for the following eventualities:

I) Safeguarding the frontiers of the German Reich and protection against surprise air attacks. (See Enclosure I).

II) "Operation White." (See Enclosure II).

III) Taking possession of Danzig. (See Enclosure III). Enclosure IV lays down the regulations for the exercise of military authority in East Prussia in the event of hostilities.

ADOLF HITLER

*Distribution List*

High Command of the Army	1 Copy No. 1
High Command of the Navy	1 Copy „ 2
Reich Air Minister and C-in-C of the Luftwaffe	1 Copy „ 3
High Command of the Wehrmacht (Operations Office/National Defence Office)	2 Copies Nos. 4 and 5

## [Enclosure I]

SAFEGUARDING THE FRONTIERS OF THE GERMAN REICH AND PROTECTION AGAINST SURPRISE AIR ATTACKS.<sup>1</sup>

## [Enclosure II]

## - OPERATION WHITE

The present attitude of Poland requires, over and above the plan "Frontier Security East" the initiation of military preparations, to remove if necessary any threat from this direction for ever.

1.) *Political Requirements and Aims*

German relations with Poland continue to be based on the principles of avoiding any disturbances. Should Poland, however, change her policy towards Germany, which so far has been based on the same principles as our own, and adopt a threatening attitude towards Germany, a final settlement might become necessary in spite of the Treaty in force with Poland.

The aim then will be to destroy Polish military strength, and create in the East a situation which satisfies the requirements of national defence. The Free State of Danzig will be proclaimed a part of the Reich territory at the outbreak of hostilities, at the latest.

The political leaders consider it their task in this case to isolate Poland if possible, that is to say, to limit the war to Poland only.

The development of increasing internal crises in France and resulting British restraint might produce such a situation in the not too distant future.

Intervention by Russia, if she were in a position to intervene, cannot be expected to be of any use to Poland, because this would mean Poland's destruction by Bolshevism.

The attitude of the Baltic States will be determined wholly by German military superiority.<sup>2</sup> [In the course of further developments it may

<sup>1</sup> Not printed. For the full text see *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. xxxiv, pp. 382-387. This directive required the provisions for safeguarding the frontiers of the Reich to be so organized that frontier and air defence could be put into effect if the situation required without general mobilization. The following points in this directive bear on foreign policy:

1. The focal point of the preparations for frontier security is in the West.

2. First priority must be given to extending the Western fortifications as a permanent installation, so that they may be held against an opponent three or four times superior in strength. In the second place the Eastern fortifications must be completed and advanced to the Polish frontier south of the Oder-Warthe bend.

The "Special Orders" attached to this directive (for the full text see *loc. cit.*) state, under section 2 ("Legal Bases"), that: "it is to be assumed that a state of defence or state of war as defined in the Reich Defence Law of September 4, 1938, will not be declared. All actions and requirements connected with the implementation of mobilization are to be based on peace-time legislation". For the Reich Defence Law, which was kept secret on Hitler's instructions, see *loc. cit.*, document 2194-PS, exhibit USA-38, vol. xxix, pp. 316-327.

<sup>2</sup> The word "superiority" is crossed out by hand in the original and "demands" inserted.

become necessary to occupy the Baltic states up to the border of the former Courland and to incorporate them in the Reich.]<sup>3</sup>

Germany cannot count on Hungary as a certain ally. Italy's attitude is determined by the Rome-Berlin Axis.

## 2.) *Military Conclusions*

The great objectives in the reconstruction of the German Wehrmacht will continue to be determined by the antagonism of the Western Democracies. "Operation White" constitutes only a precautionary complement to these preparations. It is not to be looked upon in any way, however, as the necessary prerequisite for a military conflict with the Western opponents.

The isolation of Poland will be all the more easily maintained, even after the outbreak of hostilities, if we succeed in starting the war with sudden, heavy blows and in gaining rapid successes.

The overall situation will require, however, that in all cases precautions be taken to safeguard the western frontier and the German North Sea coast, as well as the air above them.

Against the Baltic States—Lithuania in particular—security measures are to be carried out in case of a Polish march through this country.

## 3.) *Tasks of the Wehrmacht*

The task of the Wehrmacht is to destroy the Polish Armed Forces. To this end a surprise attack is to be aimed at and prepared. Camouflaged or open general<sup>4</sup> mobilization will not be ordered earlier than the day before the attack and at the latest possible moment. The forces provided for "Frontier Security West" (section I, "Frontier Security") must not be employed for the time being for any other purpose.

All other frontiers are to be kept under observation only; the Lithuanian frontier is to be covered.

## 4.) *Tasks for the Branches of the Wehrmacht*

### a) ARMY

The operational objective in the East is the annihilation of the Polish Army.

For this purpose the German Wehrmacht, on the southern flank, may enter Slovak territory. On the northern flank, communication between Pomerania and East Prussia must be established quickly.

The preparations for the opening of operations are to be made in such a way that, even without waiting for the planned deployment of mobilized units, positions can be taken up by the troops immediately available. A camouflaged assembly of these units just before the day of attack may be provided. I reserve for myself the decision in this matter.

<sup>3</sup> The sentence in square brackets has been deleted in the original and a marginal note added: "deleted according to OKW 37/39 II Ang. of April 13".

<sup>4</sup> This word is inserted by hand in the original.

Whether the forces provided for "Frontier Security West" will be deployed there in their entirety, or whether part of them will be available for some other employment, will depend upon the political situation.

#### b) NAVY

The tasks of the Navy in the Baltic Sea are as follows:

- 1) Destruction and/or elimination of the Polish Naval Forces.
- 2) Blockade of all sea-lanes to the Polish naval bases, especially Gdynia. The neutral shipping in Polish harbours and in Danzig is to be given a time limit for sailing at the beginning of the invasion of Poland. After its expiry, the Navy will be free to take blockade measures.

The disadvantages for the conduct of naval warfare caused by this time limit must be accepted.

- 3) Suppression of Polish maritime trade.
- 4) Securing of the sea-route between the Reich and East Prussia.
- 5) Protection of German sea-communications to Sweden and the Baltic States.

- 6) Reconnaissance and protection, as far as possible in an inconspicuous manner, against intervention by the Soviet Navy from the Gulf of Finland.

Suitable naval forces are to be provided for defence of the North Sea coast and its approaches.

In the southern part of the North Sea and in the Skagerrak such measures are to be taken as are deemed advisable as precautions against surprise intervention in the conflict by the Western Powers. These measures are to be restricted to the absolute minimum. Their inconspicuousness must be assured. It is of decisive importance to avoid here any sort of action which might aggravate the political attitude of the Western Powers.

#### c) LUFTWAFFE

The Luftwaffe, except for necessary forces left in the West, is to be used for a surprise attack on Poland.

Besides destruction of the Polish Air Force in the shortest time possible, the tasks of the German Luftwaffe are principally as follows:

- 1) Interference with Polish mobilization and prevention of planned strategic concentrations by the Polish Army.
- 2) Direct support of the Army, especially support of the spearheads starting immediately after the crossing of the frontier. A possible transfer of air units to East Prussia, before the beginning of operations, must not endanger the element of surprise.

The first crossing of the frontier by air is to be synchronized with the operations of the Army.

Attacks against the harbour of Gdynia may be undertaken only after expiry of the sailing period for neutral ships (see number 4b).

Strong points of air defence are to be set up above Stettin, Berlin and the Upper Silesian industrial district including Mor. Ostrava and Brno.<sup>5</sup>

[Enclosure III]

TAKING POSSESSION OF DANZIG

Surprise occupation of the Free State of Danzig may become possible independently of "Operation White" by exploiting a favourable political situation.

The preparations are to be made on the following basis:

The "Division of Power of Command in East Prussia in case of hostilities" (see Enclosure IV) will be put into effect according to paragraph 3.

Occupation by the Army will be carried out from East Prussia.

The Navy will support the action of the Army by intervention from the sea, according to detailed orders by the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. The naval forces involved are to be instructed to cooperate with the Army.

The extent to which Luftwaffe units can participate in the occupation will be decided by the Reich Air Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe.

Details on cooperation are to be settled directly between the branches of the Wehrmacht.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In the "Special Orders" attached to "Operation White" (for the full text see *loc. cit.*, pp. 392-396), the following points bear on foreign policy: Section 1 repeats the "Legal Bases" cited in footnote 1 with the following addition: "The provisions of the Hague Convention on Land Warfare will similarly apply." Section 2 ("Mobilization") states that mobilization by public proclamation is not to be expected if the operations remain restricted to "Operation White".

On June 24, 1939, Keitel issued a directive on "Operation White", in which he ordered the OKH to prepare measures to capture intact the bridges over the Lower Vistula, and, in view of the importance of the bridge at Dirschau, to consult with the Navy as to whether in the event of a *coup de main* against this bridge the surprise element might be endangered by previous naval measures in the Bay of Danzig (see *loc. cit.*, p. 396).

<sup>6</sup> In the "Special Orders" attached to "Taking Possession of Danzig" (for the full text see *loc. cit.*, pp. 398-400), the following points bear on foreign policy:

Section 1 ("General") states that "it is to be assumed that by taking possession of the Free State of Danzig a purely German territory will be restored to the sovereignty of the German Reich after a long period of separation".

Section 3 ("Mobilization") states that "the operation involving the taking possession of Danzig will be carried out by units of the peace-time Wehrmacht only and without mobilized reinforcements, so that no civilian mobilization measures are to be expected".

A draft order received by the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy from the General Officer commanding the Naval Air Force on July 27, 1939, concerning: "The occupation of the German Free State of Danzig on . . . (Y-Day)", states that the Führer has ordered the reunion of the German Free State of Danzig with the Greater German Reich and the immediate occupation of Danzig by the Wehrmacht for the protection of the German population. No hostile intentions are entertained towards Poland, as long as the latter does not resist the occupation by armed force (see *loc. cit.*, document 030-C, Exhibit GB-46, pp. 200-205).

[Enclosure IV]

ORGANIZATION OF COMMAND IN EAST PRUSSIA IN CASE  
OF HOSTILITIES<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (for full text see *loc. cit.*, pp. 400-402). Attached to this document are two further directives. The first (enclosure v) contains "Boundaries of the Zones of Operations of the Army", signed by Hitler. The second (enclosure vi) contains "Directives for the War against Enemy Economy (Economic Warfare) and Measures for the Protection of our own Economy". It is prefaced by an order, dated May 10, and signed by Hitler that the Commanders-in-Chief of the three branches of the Wehrmacht are to report by August 1, 1939, on measures taken in accordance with this directive (for the full text see *loc. cit.*, pp. 402-408).

## No. 186

1625/388496-97

*Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, April 12, 1939—9:05 p.m.  
zu Pol. II 1142<sup>2</sup> [Ang.] I.

As is known to you, the British Government, in agreement with the French Government, are continuing their efforts at encirclement directed against Germany and Italy. You are requested not to make any *démarche* in this matter. In conversations which may occur you should express yourself on the following lines:

We do not expect any further States to be hoodwinked by the British. Should further Governments nevertheless fall a prey to the enticements of the British, we should deplore this in the interests of the States themselves. We would regard any participation in, or connection with, such a combination as being directed against us and would react accordingly. In this connection you could recall the words of the Führer in his speech at Wilhelmshaven on April 1, when he said, "Whoever declares himself ready to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the Great Powers must expect to get his fingers burnt in doing so."

For the rest you should, in conversations, handle the whole affair with great composure and ridicule the nervous zeal with which the British are trying to harness other States to serve their own ends.

RIBBENTROP

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions at Brussels, The Hague, Berne, Luxembourg, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Tallinn, Riga, Kovno, Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade, Athens, Ankara. The copy here printed is as despatched and incorporates amendments by Ribbentrop telephoned from Sonnenburg (not printed, 1625/588502). Under Angabe II (not printed, 1625/388501) this telegram was repeated on the same day for information to Paris, London, Rome, Washington, Moscow, Tokyo, Warsaw, Budapest and San Sebastian.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1625/388494-95). This is the original draft of the telegram showing Ribbentrop's amendments.



## No. 187

2943/570002-04

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 332

BERLIN, April 12, 1939.

Pol. VI 992.

Today I invited the Swedish Minister<sup>1</sup> to call and spoke to him in the following terms about the Aaland question: In consequence of well-known occurrences in the sphere of general politics, and against our own wishes, in dealing with the Finno-Swedish proposals in connection with the Aaland question we had been unduly delayed.<sup>2</sup> The Minister must not, however, thereby conclude that our attitude towards the question of the neutrality of the Aaland Islands and their fortification was in any way negative. Given this as a general premise, he would the more clearly understand what I now wished to communicate to him. In dealing with the problem, we had come upon two points which caused us some difficulty. One concerned our understandable reserve over the function of the League of Nations in the Aaland Convention, as we are not members of the League. I did not wish to speak further on this question at present.

On the other hand I did wish to discuss the fact that, according to the Swedo-Finnish proposals, the Swedish Government were to occupy a position apart from the other signatory Powers, which would materially alter the whole system of the Convention. We had, therefore, reached the view that the right to take military defence measures should be accorded solely to Finland, under whose sovereignty the islands lay. Notwithstanding the historical antecedents, with which I was familiar, I believed the German view to be well founded. There naturally existed a certain relation between the position we had adopted towards the special rights claimed by Sweden and the attitude of Sweden in the event of war. I was fully cognizant of the views upon this question officially announced by the Swedish Government. We must, however, also reckon with influence being exercised by other States with which Germany might possibly clash. This was an allusion to certain utterances by the Swedish Minister, Westman.<sup>3</sup> Our anxiety at the prospect of Sweden slipping over to the other side might perhaps be removed by a Swedish declaration to be made direct to us. With such a statement in our hands, the task of formulating our note of reply in

<sup>1</sup> Arvid Richert.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 127 and 145.

<sup>3</sup> In a report from Stockholm, A 556 of Apr. 4 (not printed, 2902/565806-08), Wied stated that on Apr. 1, Westman, the Minister of Justice, had said in a speech at Norrköping that in the September crisis of 1938, Britain had begun to make preparations for an economic blockade even against States which she knew would remain neutral in the event of war.

the matter of the Aalands might be considerably simplified. I suggested to M. Richert the possible phrasing of a statement to be handed to us somewhat as follows:

"The Swedish Government declare that they will, wherever it is the concern of the Government, ensure that the normal Swedish exports to Germany suffer no prejudice in the event of war."

Actually what I was proposing here was a matter of course; but as an official declaration to us it would none the less have a certain value.

In conclusion, I again mentioned our positive attitude towards the whole question of neutralizing and fortifying the Aalands, and told the Minister that my conversation with him was the first since he had called on me with his Finnish colleague.<sup>4</sup> In the interests of a smooth settlement of the matter, it was certainly not necessary to make any communication to the Finnish Minister about our conversations. I would, however, like to ask for a Swedish statement in reply.

The Minister will report upon our conversation and will call on me again.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 464.

## No. 188

1825/388514-15

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 215 of April 13

PARIS, April 13, 1939—4:00 a.m.

Received April 14—1:10 a.m.

Pol. II 1177.

With reference to my telegram No. 211 of April 13.<sup>1</sup>

The declaration made on behalf of the French Government by Daladier on the promise of support to Rumania and Greece gives rise to the following observations:

1) The declaration means the temporary abandonment of the policy France embarked on at Munich of assuring the peace of Europe by coming to a direct understanding with the authoritarian States. In the place of this policy comes the creation of a cordon of States, in part bound by treaty to the Western Powers. France is thus returning to

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5453/E366636-38). This telegram communicated the text of a statement by Daladier to the press on Apr. 13 which contained a "declaration to the nation" announcing, in terms similar to those employed by Chamberlain in the British Parliament (see document No. 189), the French Government's guarantees to Rumania and Greece. In addition Daladier announced that the French and Polish Governments reaffirmed their alliance: "France and Poland guarantee each other immediately and directly against any threat, direct or indirect, which menaces their vital interests."

the system of collective security, in a new form, and is participating in the attempt, probably mainly inaugurated by Great Britain, to encircle the totalitarian States.

2) The Franco-Polish Alliance is severed from its connection with the League of Nations, as it existed in the Treaties of 1921 and 1925,<sup>2</sup> and reshaped on the lines of the British guarantee. That Russia is not mentioned might be due to consideration for Poland and Rumania, although this would not necessarily mean that Russia is to be omitted as a factor in the new system. The long and frequent visits of the Soviet Ambassador to Bonnet during the last few days and the clearly visible decline of opposition to the Franco-Soviet Pact seem to me significant.

3) The French declaration obviously proceeds from the assumption that certain acts already planned by Germany or Italy may be expected in the near future; its intention is to set a limit to further expansion by the authoritarian States. The text of the declaration is designed to strengthen the resistance of smaller States in the event of threats to them.

4) Besides this, France is trying to save her prestige with the smaller States, which has recently been severely shaken. She also desires, however, to bind herself by this declaration and to bar the way to further concessions in the face of expansion by the authoritarian States.

5) On the other hand, France shows no tendency to take military or diplomatic action against the previous advance of the authoritarian States. The reason for this is that now, as ever, she does not want war.

6) The reason for the sharp and precise tone of the declaration may also be that, after the events of March in Czecho-Slovakia and again after the occupation of Albania, the Government took very extensive military measures, and the resultant nervousness of the French people with the rumour-mongering, which the Government did little about, have engendered an *idée fixe* that French interests were threatened. The French Government therefore need the declaration to justify themselves and are probably also trying to avoid giving the impression that their far-reaching measures were so wide of the mark.

7) The fact that the Daladier Government have made far-reaching declarations, decisive for war and peace, and have adopted them without consulting or even informing Parliament, shows that Daladier feels extremely strong and is not afraid of any repercussions at home. Difficulties will probably only arise when he is obliged to cancel his extensive and over-hasty measures.

BRÄUER

<sup>2</sup> The Political Agreement between France and Poland agreed in Paris, Feb. 19, 1921, (for the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 118, pp. 342-343) and the Treaty between France and Poland agreed at Locarno, Oct. 16, 1925 (for the text see British White Paper: *Final Protocol of the Locarno Conference, 1925 (and Annexes) together with the Treaties between France and Poland and France and Czechoslovakia*, Cmd. 2525 of 1925).

## No. 189

7891/E571141

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 120 of April 13

LONDON, April 13, 1939.

Received April 14—10:50 a.m.

Pol. II 1180.

According to Reuter the text of the guarantee declaration in favour of Greece and Rumania in the Prime Minister's speech today in the House of Commons is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

"His Majesty's Government feel that they have both a duty and a service to perform by leaving no doubt in the mind of anybody as to their position. I therefore take this opportunity of saying on their behalf that His Majesty's Government attach the greatest importance to the avoidance of disturbance by force or threat of force of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean and the Balkan peninsula.

Consequently they have come to the conclusion that in the event of any action being taken which clearly threatens the independence of Greece or Rumania and which the Greek or Rumanian Government respectively considered it vital to resist with their national forces His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Greek or Rumanian Government as the case might be all the support in their power.

We are communicating this declaration to the Governments directly concerned and to others, especially Turkey, whose close relations with the Greek Government are known.

I understand that the French Government are making a similar declaration this afternoon."<sup>2</sup>

KORDT

<sup>1</sup> The text of the statement is quoted in English in the original. See also *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 346, col. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 188, footnote 1.

## No. 190

1625/388517

*The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 36 of April 13

SOFIA, April 13, 1939—5:45 p.m.

Received April 13—9:00 p.m.

Pol. II 1178.

With reference to your telegram No. 49 of April 12.<sup>1</sup>

When I took leave today of King Boris at a private interview, we

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 186, which was sent as telegram No. 49 to Sofia.

spoke at length about British policy. The King assured me that up to the present no attempt had been made here to involve Bulgaria in the British policy of encirclement. King Boris took a very unfavourable view of the situation and thought that Britain was growing "old".  
RÜMELIN

## No. 191

511/235509-10

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 105 of April 13

BELGRADE, April 13, 1939—7:00 p.m.

Received April 14—1:10 a.m.

Pol. IV 2559.

The Foreign Minister asked me to call on him today, in order, as he said, to discuss the general situation. He then passed at once to Yugoslavia's attitude during the events in Albania. He thought that during the last few days Yugoslavia had given clear proof of her loyalty to the policy of friendship towards the Axis. Although events had taken place on her very frontier, she had, with full confidence in the political aims of the Axis, refrained from all military measures such as were now being taken in many countries and had contented herself with reinforcing her frontier defences for the purpose of apprehending Albanian refugees. This attitude was in keeping with the firm resolve of the Yugoslav Government to maintain to the full and in all circumstances their friendly relationship to the Axis Powers. He asked me to convey to the Reich Foreign Minister the categorical assurance that he, Cincar-Marković, would adhere to the end to the policy of friendship towards the Axis Powers inaugurated during recent years, and would tolerate nothing which was in contradiction to it. Recently this had not always been easy for him for I must know how deeply the Yugoslav public had been disturbed by Italy's invasion of Albania; a . . . (1 group mutilated)<sup>1</sup> which circles opposed to the Government were naturally exploiting. He was always being asked about Germany's attitude and reference was always being made to rumours reported in the French press about German troop movements on the Yugoslav frontier. If he characterized these rumours as being without foundation and recalled statements made by Germany, that German policy wanted a strong Yugoslavia, he met with the objection that, in view of the rapid development of the present political situation of Greater Germany, this attitude on Germany's part might quickly change. In

<sup>1</sup> In the Belgrade draft (8419/E592833-35) this group reads: "disturbance [*Beunruhigung*]"

these circumstances, it would mean a tremendous enhancement of Yugoslav foreign policy, as represented by him, and of his personal position, if the interest of German policy in a strong and internally consolidated Yugoslavia could again be stated by authoritative German quarters in a way which would impress Yugoslav public opinion. He asked the Reich Foreign Minister, as his old friend, to give him as much support as possible in these difficult days for Yugoslavia. He had also been wondering if there were any possibility of a meeting with the Reich Foreign Minister.

I promised Cincar-Marković that I would transmit his request and also referred him to Italy's definite assurances regarding the integrity of Yugoslavia. Yugoslavia's loyal attitude to the events in Albania was naturally recognized to the full in Berlin, as it was in Rome, and I had not the slightest doubt that our fundamental attitude towards Yugoslavia was completely unchanged and in keeping with the sincere friendship which had long been felt by us for that country.

As the completely impeccable attitude of the Government in the Albanian question is established, and as there is also no doubt of their firm resolve to reject categorically any attempt to involve Yugoslavia in a combination hostile to the Axis, I urgently recommend that the Foreign Minister's wishes may be granted as far as possible.

HEEREN

## No. 192

509/235393

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 106 of April 13

BELGRADE, April 13, 1939—7:00 p.m.

Received April 14—11:35 p.m.

Pol. IV 2557.

During a conversation on another subject, Simović, Chief of the General Staff, today drew the attention of the Air Attaché<sup>1</sup> to the present extremely nervous state of the population and expressed the fear that the agitation among the *Volksdeutsche* of the Voivodina, which has been increasing of late, might lead to incidents which would seriously prejudice German-Yugoslav relations.

I am assured by *volksdeutsch* circles that, in our view,<sup>2</sup> Halwax and his friends, adherents of the Revival Movement [*Erneuerungsbewegung*],

<sup>1</sup> Lt.-Col. von Schönebeck.

<sup>2</sup> In the Belgrade draft of this telegram (9538/E672313) this reads "in fact" and not "in our view". Gustav Halwax was one of the four signatories of the Declaration of Apr. 10, 1938, which set up the *volksdeutsch* United Front. Considerable material on *volksdeutsch* activities in Yugoslavia has been filmed on Serial 7494. See also document No. 94.

have recently been strongly exposing themselves in their work of agitation, and have been hinting that they are following Berlin's instructions.

If you agree with me that any unrest is at present politically undesirable, I recommend that the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle be informed to that effect.<sup>3</sup>

HEEREN

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "The matter is being dealt with by Cultural Policy Department. Hei[nburg] 15/4."

## No. 193

6783/E513500

### *Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, April 13, 1939.

W 511 g<sup>1</sup> III.

The Netherlands Military Attaché<sup>2</sup> called on me today and informed me that the Netherlands Government continued to attach great importance to placing the order for 120 light field howitzers with Germany.<sup>3</sup> For reasons of training, however, it was absolutely essential that the first 20 be made available as early as October 1, 1939. I had the impression that the Netherlands Government attach such great importance to the fulfilment of this request that, were it not forthcoming, the order would not be placed with Germany.

After a discussion with the A.G.K. (Herr von Waltershausen) I told the Military Attaché that I did not think it would be possible to comply with such a short term of delivery. The Military Attaché said that surely the 20 guns, as it was such a small number, could be taken from current manufacture for the German Army.

I promised the Military Attaché that he would soon have a reply.<sup>4</sup>

Herewith submitted to the Economic Policy Department, Division II, with the request for further action. Please keep me informed.

CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> See Addendum to this volume, document No. A, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Captain B.R.P.F. Hasselman.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 119.

<sup>4</sup> A minute of May 10 (not printed, 6783/E513525) reads as follows: "Captain Rapke, Military Economic Staff, has informed us that the loan to the Netherlands of 16-20 field howitzers is agreed to. Details would be settled with Krupp and the Netherlands Military Attaché. I have informed the Netherlands Legation (M. v. Bostzelaer). K[reutzwald] 10/5."

## No. 194

1975/438975

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 157

BERLIN, April 14, 1939—5:05 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 2506.<sup>1</sup>With reference to your telegram No. 173.<sup>1</sup>

1) The communication of your telegram No. 167 [sic]<sup>2</sup> to Budapest Legation was done not with a view to mediation but—in accordance with its contents—with a view to verifying the facts in our own interests. The instructions given in our telegram No. 152<sup>3</sup> to tell Gafencu about the Hungarian *démenti* served merely to express our hope for an early easing of tension. [As you know, we have always refused to mediate up to now, and will not do so in the future. Please make this clear to Gafencu when an opportunity occurs.]<sup>4</sup>

2) For the declaration already given by the Hungarian Foreign Minister to the Rumanian Minister on April 6,<sup>5</sup> please see our despatch by courier, Pol. IV 2483.<sup>6</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 180.<sup>2</sup> An error for No. 169. See document No. 180, footnote 2.<sup>3</sup> Not printed. See *loc. cit.*<sup>4</sup> The passage in square brackets was deleted before despatch.<sup>5</sup> See document No. 165.<sup>6</sup> Not printed (5985/E440377).

## No. 195

1625/368525-26

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 183 of April 14

BUCHAREST, April 14, 1939—10:00 p.m.  
Received April 15—2:15 p.m.  
Pol. II 1197.

In the last few days Foreign Minister Gafencu has repeatedly mentioned the Anglo-French declaration of guarantee.<sup>1</sup> Tremendous pressure had been exerted on him from abroad and also from certain circles at home to conclude a bilateral agreement. The King and the Government, however, had been firm in their resolve not to enter into any agreements which might be directed against Germany even in the slightest degree. He had therefore sent Secretary General Cretzianu

<sup>1</sup> Of Apr. 13. See documents Nos. 188, footnote 1, and 189.



to London<sup>2</sup> and Paris to make it clear to the Governments there that Rumania would enter into no agreements which might involve her in the British encirclement policy. Minister President Călinescu, who happened to take part in the conversation with me, emphatically confirmed this. On the other hand the Rumanian Government did not think that they should decline a unilateral promise of a guarantee, especially as some of their neighbours had revisionist intentions about Rumanian territory. It was, of course, clear to the Government that this could not mean Germany as they were convinced of Germany's good intentions. Rumania would in fact welcome it, if the German Government would also make such a declaration of guarantee in Rumania's favour.

I replied that I considered the British declaration of guarantee as being fairly worthless. It could have fruitful results perhaps only against Soviet Russia. In my opinion, however, it had not been made for the sake of its effectiveness, but only by way of British propaganda against Germany. I ridiculed the shelter of the umbrella and recalled that it had been of no avail to the Negus, Schuschnigg, Beneš and del Vayo: neither did I think it worthy of so great a country as Rumania to have resort to such protection.

These remarks were not very pleasing to M. Gafencu; he said that the British proposal had cost him many a sleepless night. In the end, however, he had agreed, as, after mature reflection, he had been unable to find anything in it which disturbed his relations with the Reich. He had guided the press and that very day he had been reproached by the French Ambassador because its tone was not cordial enough. He referred in particular to articles in *Timul* [sic ? *Timpul*] and *Universul* which had been inspired by him. *Curentul* was going too far with its flat rejection.

When in reply to this I referred to the telegram of the Jew Hefter in *Le Moment*,<sup>3</sup> which mentions the special services of Tilea in bringing about the declaration, by saying that Tilea's activity was based on the instructions of the King, Gafencu thumped the table in fury and said that behind this were Tilea's mean tricks.

Gafencu read me his telegram to his Minister in Berlin, which sets out the above points of view on Rumania's attitude.

I urgently recommended that he should not allow himself to be misled by Reuter reports from Paris and Bucharest which constituted intrigues aimed at discrediting the Rumanian Government, and thus Gafencu, in our eyes. I urged Gafencu to stay in Berlin until the parade on April 20.<sup>4</sup>

FABRICIUS

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 180, and footnote 7 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> French language newspaper published in Bucharest.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., for Hitler's birthday.

## No. 196

1625/388509

*Circular of the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

BERLIN, April 14, 1939—9:40 p.m.  
zu Pol. II 1166<sup>2</sup> Ang. I.

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

The Legation at Tallinn reports<sup>2</sup> that an authoritative Estonian military personage stated informally that Estonia had received the offer of a guarantee of the integrity of the Estonian State and Estonian sovereignty, not only from the Soviet Union,<sup>3</sup> but also from Britain.

If this is the case it can be assumed that a similar offer has been made by Britain to the other Baltic States. If you can learn anything about this without revealing our source, please report by telegram.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in London, Moscow, Helsinki, Riga and Kovno.

<sup>2</sup> Report A 157 of Apr. 8 (not printed, 1625/388507). In telegram No. 37 of Apr. 14 (not printed, 1625/388510) Woermann requested the Legation at Tallinn to check this report with the Estonian Foreign Ministry. See also document No. 202.

<sup>3</sup> In a circular telegram sent, for information, on Apr. 6 (not printed, 406/214341-42) to Moscow, Warsaw, Helsinki, Riga, Kovno and Bucharest, Bismarck repeated an earlier Tallinn telegram, the original of which has not been found, which reported that a Soviet Note had been sent to the Estonian Minister in Moscow on Apr. 1, declaring Estonian independence to be a matter of vital importance to the U.S.S.R.; that the Estonian Note of Apr. 3, in reply, had stated that Estonia would defend her sovereignty against all aggressors; and that a similar Soviet Note had been received on Apr. 1 by the Latvian Government. The text, in French translation, of a Soviet declaration dated Mar. 28, and an Estonian Note in reply, dated Apr. 7, were forwarded by the Legation at Tallinn to Berlin on Apr. 15 with report No. A 166 (not printed, 466/226999-7003).

<sup>4</sup> Replies were sent from London on Apr. 21 (1625/388578-80), from Moscow on Apr. 17 (7891/E571169), from Helsinki on Apr. 17 (7891/E571152), from Riga on Apr. 19 (7637/E545407) and from Kovno on Apr. 15 (7637/E540405) and were all in the negative.

## No. 197

449/222623

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 337

BERLIN, April 14, 1939.

After I had informed Ambassador Attolico this morning of the initial draft of instructions to Athens and Bucharest and of similar instructions to Ankara,<sup>1</sup> in order thus to prepare the way for a conversation between the Reich Foreign Minister and Count Ciano, Attolico telephoned me again towards evening to tell me of a conversation which he had had shortly before with the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>2</sup> Attolico

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1625/388598-622). See document No. 203, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> No record has been found.

stated that he had spoken to Ciano and that the latter had spoken to the Duce. The Duce did not attach the slightest importance to the British guarantee to Greece. He took the view that Greece was dependent on the grace of Italy and he would not go beyond the exchange of views between Rome and Athens which had taken place a few days ago. As far as Rumania was concerned, Mussolini was of the opinion that it would be best to dress him down a bit,<sup>3</sup> during his forthcoming visit to Berlin.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> Evidently Gafencu is meant. See document No. 203.

## No. 198

230/151897-98/2

*Note by the Deputy Director of the Information and Press  
Department*

BERLIN, April 14, 1939.

For the Foreign Minister.

At 6:30 this afternoon Ministerialrat Böhmer<sup>1</sup> telephoned me and told me the following:

He wanted to inform me that the Propaganda Minister, Dr. Goebbels, on the occasion of a meeting with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, Cincar-Marković, had received a request from the latter that Yugoslavia's conduct during the last few days should receive special recognition in the German press.<sup>2</sup> He particularly desired this because it would strengthen his (Cincar-Marković's) position in Yugoslavia. In reply I told Herr Böhmer that before such a desire could be fulfilled it must be studied, and that it could not be carried out in the German press without the consent of the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry. Thereupon Dr. Böhmer asked me to get in touch with Ministerialrat Fritzsche,<sup>3</sup> to whom he had already conveyed the wish of the Reich Propaganda Minister. As far as he knew, Herr Fritzsche intended to quote Yugoslav press comment in several newspapers and thus to make special reference to Yugoslavia's attitude.

After I had discussed this question and also the question of expediency, what should be said, and presentation with the State Secretary, I contacted Herr Fritzsche and gave him the following instructions: With reference to the fulfilment of the Propaganda Minister's wish, the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry considers that in view of foreign policy, the directive should be applied and treated as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Karl Böhmer of the Ministry of Propaganda.

<sup>2</sup> Goebbels went on a tour of South East Europe and Egypt, Mar. 25-June 6.

<sup>3</sup> Director of the German Press Department in the Ministry of Propaganda.

Favourable Yugoslav press views to be published in three newspapers in a not too prominent position. A commentary in the following terms to be given: "It must be admitted that, in the present general uncertainty, Yugoslavia has displayed remarkable calm. It appears at the same time that, in judging the situation, Yugoslav policy is conducted with special skill and that Cincar-Marković has adapted himself realistically to events in line with the pacific policy of the Axis Powers."

For his further information, I told Herr Fritzsche that this action must on no account be made to appear too obvious as that would not strengthen but weaken Cincar-Marković's position.

DR. SCHMIDT

### No. 199

F19/478-474

*SS-Gruppenführer Heydrich to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, April 14, 1939.

DEAR PARTY COMRADE VON RIBBENTROP: I am sending you enclosed a report on the views of Italian circles regarding the dissolution of Czecho-Slovakia.

I have also sent a copy of the report to Minister President Göring, Minister Lammers, Reichsleiter Bormann, and the Reichsführer—SS.

Heil Hitler!

HEYDRICH

[Enclosure]

SECRET

Subject: Italy's foreign policy.

On March 22, 1939, a private conversation lasting many hours took place between a confidential agent and an important representative of Italy's cultural and political interests.

With reference to recent political events, the Italian in question stated that these had been observed in Italy with very mixed feelings. It was the view of the widest Italian political circles that Italy's political position at the end of last year, and thus Mussolini's policy, had been completely unsatisfactory. It was commonly said that this unfavourable development began with the *Anschluss* of Austria to the Reich. As a result, Italy had lost an important key position in European politics. Italians had hoped that a substitute would be found in Hungary, but they must now realize that such hopes have proved abortive because:

1. Hungary does not possess that key position in Europe which was Austria's.

2. Hungary therefore shows little or no interest in European politics.

3. Political conditions within Hungary are so chaotic and unsatisfactory that she cannot be brought into play as a political factor with sufficiently decisive effect.

4. The leading Hungarian statesmen display so vacillating an attitude in the foreign policy of their country that, from the Italian point of view, they cannot be regarded as reliable.

Italy was now obliged to realize that her wish—to allow Germany to become only so strong as not to embarrass Italy—has not been attained but that the German Reich had strengthened its position in Europe to a degree far exceeding what Italy, from her point of view, can consider tolerable. This was already shown by the fact that, in its foreign policy, the German Reich appeared to have little or no regard for Italy, and was acting in complete independence of its Axis partner. Italy had the feeling that she was fast being excluded more and more from South East and Eastern Europe by the policy of the preponderant Great Power, Germany.

Naturally, Central European policy was, from the Italian point of view, of secondary importance by comparison with Italian interests in the Mediterranean. It must, however, also be admitted that Italy, in pursuance of her aims in the Mediterranean, had not received that backing from the Reich for which she had hoped. As to the colonization of Abyssinia, it must be acknowledged that this country had, up to the present, fallen far short of expectations. Apart from the general unrest of the Abyssinian population which caused the Italians great difficulties on all sorts of occasions, it had so far not been possible to push forward the economic development of the country to any considerable extent. For one thing the necessary funds were lacking. Above all, however, direct access to Abyssinia was not assured as long as Italy had not acquired a decisive voice in the management of the Suez Canal Company, and did not possess Jibuti and the railway from there to Addis-Ababa. The only advantage was that Abyssinia could, to a very considerable extent, absorb Italy's surplus population, as a result of which the pressure of population has somewhat abated in the Kingdom of Italy. Italy's immediate and exclusive interest, therefore, was to win decisive advantages from Britain and France in the Suez Canal question and in that of Jibuti.

There was no serious intention of annexing Tunis; on the contrary, it would doubtless be accepted as satisfactory if an assured national and economic existence were granted to the Italian population there. The Tunis question was therefore no reason for serious dispute between Italy and the Western Powers.

As regards the Spanish affair, the Italian view might be expressed somewhat as follows:

The Italian volunteers in Spain formed, in the Italian view, the

nucleus and major part of Franco's troops, as it was they who, in fact, had gained the military successes. If Franco now believed that, their work done, he could simply send these Italians home without more ado, he would be mistaken. The recall of these volunteers was exclusively the concern of Italy, and Italy would only take this step if Franco offered compensation for services rendered. It seemed to the Italians that a naval base in the Balearics (Majorca), which they regarded as a counter-weight to Gibraltar and the French sea communications in the western basin of the Mediterranean, would constitute such compensation.

The Fascist Grand Council would deliberate in Rome on these vital questions of Italy's and in particular on her attitude towards Germany.

He further stated that in political circles the following alternatives for the shaping of Italy's future foreign policy were being discussed:

According to the first alternative, the object of foreign policy should be gradually to loosen the bonds with Germany because, although Germany had hitherto been esteemed as a powerful friend, she must today be feared as too powerful; besides which, the Reich no longer sufficiently appreciated the support and readiness to help accorded by Italy. This alternative could not, indeed, be characterized as particularly moral, but morals could not be allowed to play a part in a nation's vital policy. Moreover, this solution would be universally and most readily accepted and understood by the Italian people. It would also, in the view of very wide circles, be the most likely to succeed in obtaining from the Western Powers the concessions in the Mediterranean indispensable for Italy's future development. It is said that concession to Italy of a controlling interest in the Suez Canal Administration and the cession of Jibuti, with the railway, could be obtained without too much difficulty in return for Italy renouncing the annexation of Tunis, if the outbreak of hostilities could thereby be avoided.

According to the second alternative Mussolini—as in the autumn of 1938 (Munich)—should once again play in grand style the role of mediator between the two camps of the European Powers, so that he might thereby appear in Europe as the great peacemaker. In this event the Italians could indulge in the justifiable hope, not only of avoiding a war exceedingly distasteful to them, but also of obtaining concessions for themselves from both camps. In this event, Italy would not even be obliged to take up a hostile attitude toward her former ally, Germany. She would also, however, come to be regarded in a friendlier light by the Western Powers. Germany, it is thought, would not be unwilling to grant Italy concessions if thereby hostilities of an unprecedented magnitude were to be avoided. The Western Powers would be guided by similar ideas; and in the view of the Italians this alternative had the positive advantage of rehabilitating Mussolini in the eyes of Italians after the disillusionment over his recent Axis policy.

## No. 200

E21/B005776-80

*President Roosevelt to the Führer and Chancellor*

Telegram from Washington

The White House, April 15, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

His Excellency Adolf Hitler,

Chancellor of the German Reich,  
Berlin.

You realize I am sure, that throughout the world hundreds of millions of human beings are living today in constant fear of a new war or even a series of wars. The existence of this fear, and the possibility of such a conflict, is of definite concern to the people of the United States for whom I speak, as it must also be to the peoples of the other nations of the entire western hemisphere. All of them know that any major war, even if it were to be confined to other continents, must bear heavily on them during its continuance and also for generations to come. Because of the fact that after the acute tension in which the world has been living during the past few weeks there would seem to be at least a momentary relaxation, because no troops are at this moment on the march, this may be an opportune moment for me to send you this message. On a previous occasion<sup>2</sup> I have addressed you on behalf of the settlement of political, economic, and social problems by peaceful methods and without resort to arms. But the tide of events seems to have reverted to the threat of arms. If such threats continue, it seems inevitable that much of the world must become involved in common ruin. All the world, victor nations, vanquished nations, and neutral nations will suffer. I refuse to believe that the world is, of necessity, such a prisoner of destiny. On the contrary, it is clear that the leaders of great nations have it in their power to liberate their peoples from the disaster that impends. It is equally clear that in their own minds and in their own hearts the peoples themselves desire that their fears be ended. It is, however, unfortunately necessary to take cognizance of recent facts. Three nations in Europe and one in Africa have seen their independent existence terminated. A vast territory in another independent nation of the far east has been occupied by a neighbouring state. Reports, which we trust are not true, insist that further acts of aggression are contemplated against still other independent nations. Plainly the world is moving toward the moment when this situation must end in catastrophe unless a more rational way of guiding events is found. You have repeatedly asserted that you and the German people have no desire for war. If this is true there need be no war.

<sup>1</sup> The full text is in English in the original.<sup>2</sup> On Sept. 26, 1938; see vol. II of this Series, document No. 632.

Nothing can persuade the peoples of the earth that any governing power has any right or need to inflict the consequences of war on its own or any other people save in the case of self-evident home defence. In making this statement we as Americans speak not through selfishness or fear of weakness. If we speak now it is with the voice of strength and with friendship for mankind. It is still clear to me that international problems can be solved at the council table. It is therefore no answer to the plea for peaceful discussion for one side to plead that, unless they receive assurances beforehand that the verdict will be theirs, they will not lay aside their arms. In conference rooms, as in courts, it is necessary that both sides enter upon the discussion in good faith, assuming that substantial justice will accrue to both: and it is customary and necessary that they leave their arms outside the room where they confer. I am convinced that the cause of world peace would be greatly advanced if the nations of the world were to obtain a frank statement relating to the present and future policy of governments: because the United States, as one of the nations of the western hemisphere, is not involved in the immediate controversies which have arisen in Europe, I trust that you may be willing to make such a statement of policy to me as the head of a nation far removed from Europe in order that I, acting only with the responsibility and obligation of a friendly intermediary, may communicate such declaration to other nations now apprehensive as to the course which the policy of your government may take. Are you willing to give assurance that your armed forces will not attack or invade the territory or possessions of the following independent nations: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Great Britain and Ireland, France, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Luxemburg, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Russia, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, Iraq, the Arabias, Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Iran [?]. Such an assurance clearly must apply not only to the present day but also to the future, sufficiently long to give every opportunity to work by peaceful methods for a more permanent peace. I therefore suggest that you construe the word "future" to apply to a minimum period of assured non-aggression—ten years at the least—a quarter of a century, if we dare look that far ahead. If such assurance is given by your government, I will immediately transmit it to the governments of the nations I have named and I will simultaneously inquire whether, as I am reasonably sure, each of the nations enumerated above will in turn give like assurance for transmission to you. Reciprocal assurances such as I have outlined will bring to the world an immediate measure of relief. I propose that if it is given, two essential problems shall promptly be discussed in the resulting peaceful surroundings, and in those discussions the government of the United States will gladly take part. The discussions which I have in mind



relate to the most effective and immediate manner through which the peoples of the world can obtain progressive relief from the crushing burden of armament which is each day bringing them more closely to the brink of economic disaster. Simultaneously the government of the United States would be prepared to take part in discussions looking towards the most practical manner of opening up avenues of international trade to the end that every nation of the earth may be enabled to buy and sell on equal terms in the world market as well as to possess assurance of obtaining the materials and products of peaceful economic life. At the same time, those governments other than the United States which are directly interested could undertake such political discussions as they may consider necessary or desirable. We recognize complex world problems which affect all humanity but we know that study and discussion of them must be held in an atmosphere of peace. Such an atmosphere of peace cannot exist if negotiations are overshadowed by the threat of force or by the fear of war. I think you will not misunderstand the spirit of frankness in which I send you this message. Heads of great governments in this hour are literally responsible for the fate of humanity in the coming years. They cannot fail to hear the prayers of their peoples to be protected from the foreseeable chaos of war. History will hold them accountable for the lives and the happiness of all—even unto the least. I hope that your answer will make it possible for humanity to lose fear and regain security for many years to come. A similar message is being addressed to the Chief of the Italian Government.<sup>3</sup>

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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<sup>3</sup> This was sent to Mussolini by the American Secretary of State on the same day.

No. 201

2422/511972

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 120 of April 15

WASHINGTON, April 15, 1939—3:50 a.m.

Received April 16—2:20 a.m.

Pol. IX 674.

I hear confidentially from political opposition circles that Roosevelt's appeal<sup>1</sup> was principally brought about by news of the failure of the Anglo-French policy of alliance.

THOMSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 200.

## No. 202

1796/408803-04

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Estonia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 34 of April 15

TALLINN, April 15, 1939—6:15 p.m.

Received April 15—8:30 p.m.

The Deputy Foreign Minister, Õpik, has just told me categorically that no offer of a British guarantee has been made either at the Foreign Ministry or at the Estonian Legation in London.<sup>1</sup> Discussions to this end could not have been conducted by other Estonian authorities, as otherwise the Foreign Ministry must have been informed of the matter.<sup>2</sup>

Passing to the Soviet offer of a guarantee, Õpik said that Estonia regarded the Russian declaration as a powerful threat aimed at the occupation of Estonia, and that her answer, although polite, had been in the form of a most emphatic rejection. The Estonian Government had, therefore, regarded the Soviet military demonstration on the frontier on Easter Monday as a further threat and, in consequence, had themselves caused reports of the military parade, which had roused the greatest alarm among the frontier population, to be published in the press, in the interest of reassuring both Estonian and world public opinion. Estonia had on various occasions urged in Moscow publication of the declarations. However, since Litvinov had again told Rei, the Estonian Minister, that he refused to allow publication on the grounds that Latvia was also opposed to it, the Estonian Government had now decided to send to neighbouring States and Great Powers a translation of both declarations without the agreement of Moscow. Acting on instructions from higher authority, he handed it to me for transmission to Berlin, urgently requesting, however, that for the present it should be treated in strict confidence. When I asked about Latvia's attitude, Õpik said that Estonia continued to regard it with the deepest distrust, as far as the Soviet Union was concerned. The original translation<sup>3</sup> of the declarations is being despatched today.

Bock

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 196.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 38 of Apr. 18 (not printed, 7891/E571164), Bock reported that an official of the Estonian Ministry of the Interior, as well as other sources he named, were quite definite that conversations on an English guarantee to Estonia had taken place, adding that a joint Anglo-Polish *démarche* was involved.

<sup>3</sup> In French. See document No. 196, footnote 3.

## No. 203

1625/388545-46

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 184

BERLIN, April 15, 1939—8:00 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 1233.

For the personal information of the Ambassador.

It has been under consideration here whether to ask the Rumanian and Greek Governments for statements as to whether and in what way they were parties to the declaration of guarantee by the Governments of Britain and France, and what attitude they have adopted, and intend to adopt in future, towards the British and French action. In accordance with their answers we would then consider our attitude towards these countries. The matter was discussed here on these lines on April 13 with Attolico,<sup>1</sup> who after a telephone conversation with Ciano and after the latter had spoken to Mussolini, gave as the Duce's reply that Italy did not consider action on these lines to be expedient at present. As to Greece, Italy did not wish to go beyond the recent exchange of views between Rome and Athens. As to Rumania, Italy considered that it would be best to discuss the matter during Gafencu's forthcoming visits to Berlin and Rome. No decision has yet been reached on our further attitude in this matter.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> According to document No. 197, this conversation took place on Apr. 14.

<sup>2</sup> According to a note by Sonnleithner of Apr. 22 (not printed, 1625/388597), the draft telegrams prepared for despatch to Bucharest, Athens and Ankara (see document No. 197, footnote 1) were cancelled on Ribbentrop's instructions. It would seem that, as far as Bucharest was concerned, the question was settled by a telegram to Fabricius on Apr. 16 (not printed, 169/82573), in which the latter was informed that no action on his part was required, as Ribbentrop would personally discuss the matter during Gafencu's visit.

## No. 204

975/438383

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 118 of April 15

BUDAPEST, April 15, 1939—11:53 p.m.

Received April 16—3:20 a.m.

Pol. IV 2593.

The Foreign Minister told me that the reason for the *détente* in relations with Rumania was that the Rumanian Foreign Minister

had today handed the Hungarian Minister in Bucharest<sup>1</sup> the following Note:

"I have the honour to inform you that as a result of statements made to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Hungarian Parliament by Count Csáky, the Hungarian Foreign Minister, expressing the Hungarian Government's intention to respect the frontiers of Rumania, a statement with which you acquainted me this morning, the Royal Rumanian Government have decided to release the older classes which have recently been mobilized."<sup>2</sup>

Gafencu had added that he could not comment on Csáky's proposal for concluding a minority agreement until he had ascertained the views of the King.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> László de Bárdossy.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Note is in French in the original.

## No. 205

F19/487-479

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

April 15, 1939.

#### RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN FIELD MARSHAL GÖRING AND THE DUCE IN THE PRESENCE OF COUNT CIANO.

The Field Marshal stated that he had been charged by the Führer by telephone to convey to the Duce on behalf of the German Reich the most sincere congratulations on the settlement of the Albanian affair. Germany had been immensely pleased with the Duce's swift and determined action in Albania and recognized with great satisfaction the increase of power thus accruing to the Axis. In Germany's opinion the successful accomplishment of this affair should likewise be described as a very considerable strategic gain for Italy.

This led Field Marshal Göring to speak of Yugoslavia and he mentioned that a week after the Czech affair a confidential business agent in South East Europe had informed him (the Field Marshal) that several Croat representatives, who were followers of Dr. Maček, would like to be received by the Field Marshal. He (Göring) had replied that this interview could not take place and that if those concerned thought they ought to discuss political questions with a foreign Government, but not with their own, they should then approach Rome and not Berlin. Germany firmly held the view that Yugoslavia belonged one hundred per cent to Italy's sphere of influence. Germany had only to

safeguard her normal economic interests there. Moreover he (Field Marshal Göring) was very well acquainted with conditions in Yugoslavia. He was a friend of Stojadinović and knew the Prince Regent very well. He knew that as a result of the latest events Yugoslavia was a prey to great anxiety and a perhaps understandable fear. Any Yugoslav statesman who saw matters clearly, must realize in his own mind that a guarantee by the Western Powers was completely illusory, whilst on the other hand Yugoslavia had in Hungary and Bulgaria two neighbours who, despite all protestations to the contrary, were, after all, claiming portions of her territory. It was clear in these circumstances that Yugoslavia could only survive if she formed close links with her two other great neighbours, Italy and Germany, for only thus could she ensure her existence in face of any claims by other neighbouring countries.

Yugoslavia's internal situation was fairly critical. The Croats and the Serbs more or less counterbalanced one another. The Croats could for example dislocate any mobilization of the country by obstructionist tactics. If Yugoslavia should turn too much to Britain and Paris it was only necessary to give the Croats some encouragement and the Yugoslavs would be completely incapable of action. Stojadinović had understood this situation and had therefore adapted himself to close cooperation with the Axis. The Axis had its own interest in the peaceful development of affairs in Yugoslavia. If, however, Yugoslavia's attitude in foreign affairs should become uncertain and thus come to be regarded with suspicion by the Axis Powers, then such interest would cease.

It should be made plain to the Yugoslavs that in the event of war with the Western Powers the Axis countries would expect a benevolent neutrality from Yugoslavia, thus making it possible for Italy and Germany, if need be, to purchase the necessary material from Yugoslavia. Stojadinović and the Prince Regent had realized this necessity. Prince Paul, however, as a result of his British connections, changed his mind very frequently. However firmly convinced he was at a given date of the necessity for a pro-Axis policy, a short stay in England had usually sufficed to shake this conviction again.

Stojadinović's resignation<sup>1</sup> had, moreover, come as a complete surprise to Germany. The Duce interposed here that it had almost involved a *coup d'état*, and in any case not a normal parliamentary crisis. The Field Marshal stated that Britain's desires were one of the chief causes of the disappearance of Stojadinović. Prince Paul had sacrificed him because he had become too powerful. Furthermore, the leader of the Slovenes, Korošec, who was a priest, had also defected

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<sup>1</sup> The Stojadinović Cabinet had resigned on Feb. 4, 1939, after a Government crisis in which five Ministers had tendered their resignations.

and the whole affair had been carried out in rather an underhand manner, after the members of the Government had taken their leave of Stojadinović at 11 p.m., as if nothing had happened. Then, an hour later, they had addressed a letter to Stojadinović informing him that they were resigning from the Government. However, Stojadinović had still believed that he had Prince Paul on his side, only to learn next day that the latter was apparently in the plot too. Now attempts were being made to discredit Stojadinović in the Axis countries and to accuse him of all kinds of things which were probably untrue. He had in any case been a clear-headed man and a better partner for Italy and Germany than his present completely insignificant successor.<sup>2</sup>

In the further course of the conversation the Field Marshal turned to economic questions and gave the Duce the Führer's assurance that Germany would not act unilaterally in carrying out major economic actions in South East Europe, but would consult Italy each time beforehand. The Führer attached great importance to letting the Duce know that Germany did not wish to make an exclusive claim to South East Europe.

With reference to the former Czecho-Slovakia, Field Marshal Göring mentioned the fact that, on the basis of the amounts of war material available, of which the Duce had already been informed in detail,<sup>3</sup> Czecho-Slovakia, even in her reduced state, doubtless had to be regarded as the most strongly armed country in the world in relation to population. In reply to a question by the Duce about the quality of the Air Force, the Field Marshal replied that approximately 1,500 aircraft including trainers had been available, but that neither the fighter aircraft nor the bombers, which were built from a Russian prototype, which was in its turn based on the American Martin bomber, could be claimed as a modern air weapon. In any case the powerful armaments of Czecho-Slovakia showed how dangerous this country would have been in a serious conflict, even after Munich. The position of both Axis powers had been made easier by Germany's action, and also, among other things, by the fact that economic possibilities, resulting from the transfer of Czecho-Slovakia's great production capacity (armaments potential) to Germany, [sentence incomplete?] This contributed to a considerable strengthening of the Axis *vis-à-vis* the Western Powers. Furthermore Germany no longer needed to keep one single division ready for defence against that country. This too was an advantage which would in the last analysis benefit both Axis Powers.

In respect of Poland too Germany's action in Czecho-Slovakia ought to be regarded as an advantage for the Axis in the event of Poland finally joining the anti-Axis powers. Germany could then attack that

<sup>2</sup> Dragiša Cvetković.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 52.

country from two flanks, and was only 25 minutes flying time from the new Polish industrial centre, which had been moved further into the interior of the country for the very reason that the other Polish industrial districts were so near the frontier, but which had now come to be situated near a frontier again, as a result of what had happened.

Continuing, Field Marshal Göring pointed out that the various stages of the Czecho-Slovak operation had developed within a very short time and at breakneck speed. He had been in San Remo and had continuously received news from the Führer which showed that the situation was changing from day to day in an unforeseen manner. The final decision had only been made under dramatic circumstances in the night when Hácha came to Berlin. To the Reich Chancellor's complete surprise, Hácha had not only made the proposal to come to Berlin, but during the negotiations had also used the expression "that the Czech people were confidently placing their destiny in the hands of the Führer".<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Hácha, who had a weak heart, had had another heart attack during the discussions, so that a doctor had to be called and had to give him injections. It was not until 5 a.m. that the affair had been finally settled. The only thing that was actually certain the day before Hácha's visit, and had been carried out the afternoon before, was the occupation of the district around Mor. Ostrava and Vitkovice,<sup>5</sup> which Germany undertook so swiftly because reports from Poland indicated that the Polish Government intended to occupy this territory at once should any disorders break out in Czecho-Slovakia. In any case the whole Czech affair had been bound up with constant surprises and precipitate developments. For example even Germany did not quite know what the Slovaks eventually intended to do. Thus Ďurčanský had one day sent a telegram to Germany requesting assistance,<sup>6</sup> and immediately afterwards the rest of the Slovak Government had denied his right to send such a telegram. One thing alone had been plain to Germany, namely that she could not remain inactive if the Slovaks should declare their independence.

The Field Marshal then went on to speak of the date when Germany would best be prepared for a major trial of strength. In connection with this he pointed out that, at the moment, Germany was comparatively weak at sea, since the two new battleships, which had been launched recently, could not be put into commission until next year and two further battleships would not be launched until next year. In the case of the Luftwaffe, too, a regrouping was in progress and a

<sup>4</sup> For the circumstances of Hácha's visit to Hitler, see vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 207 and 216.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 225.

<sup>6</sup> No such telegram from Ďurčanský has been found but see document No. 10, and vol. iv of this Series, document No. 209.

change-over was being made to a new type of bomber, the "Ju 88", the production of which still had to be got under way. This new German bomber had such a great range that not only could Britain herself be attacked but it would also penetrate further westward to bomb shipping bound for Britain from the Atlantic Ocean. Germany would of course be ready for action if any conflict suddenly broke out. When considering at what date the armaments position would be most favourable, the two facts mentioned above, namely the still inadequate armament at sea and the change-over to the new type of bomber in the Luftwaffe, should not be disregarded. Moreover a monthly production of 280 "Ju 88" aircraft could be expected by the autumn and 350 a month of these aircraft by the end of the year. On the basis of these considerations, he concluded that in nine months or a year's time the situation, viewed from the military angle, would be more favourable to the Axis. On the other hand, rearmament had not yet progressed very far in Britain and France. In many cases factories were only just being built for the production of war material. In any case Britain could scarcely produce any results worth mentioning before 1942 from her increased air rearmament, which was now commencing.

However, the Führer considered it to be almost out of the question that Britain and France would not stand together. In any conflict both countries would, in the German view, support one another to the uttermost. Only if Britain were to reverse her political course completely, and if the costs and risks of her present policy were to become too high, would she perhaps resign herself to limiting her efforts to the preservation of the Empire and give the authoritarian countries a free hand to secure their vital needs. At the moment Britain had a weak Government which had yielded to pressure from the left. Thus Britain had deviated from her old policy of rendering assistance only on the basis of her own judgement of the actual situation in each case and, by a complete break with her traditional policy, had now committed herself in advance to lend assistance, and, indeed, under conditions which could be determined by the other partner. Another question of course was how Britain could implement her guarantee commitment in actual fact. How for example did she intend to aid Poland or Rumania? She had no opportunity of sending troops and could actually only fulfil her commitments by starting a general war.

Taking all in all it should be emphasized that the Axis was in a very strong position, and that, in the event of a general conflict, it could defeat any likely opponents.

The Duce drew attention to the grave internal crisis in Yugoslavia due to the conflict between Croats and Serbs. The Axis was interested in a united Yugoslavia only if this country sided with the Axis. If the present internal crisis were settled it would be necessary to keep a sharp look-out on the Axis side. If the Croats and the Serbs should



reach agreement, it would be necessary to be on the alert to see what course the country's foreign policy then took. The Duce then asked the Field Marshal for his opinion on the probable development of this internal crisis and on the question of whether, in the event of a general conflict, Yugoslavia would be for or against the Axis, or whether she would remain neutral.

The Field Marshal replied that he thought Yugoslavia's attitude would be one of benevolent neutrality. In his view one ought not, however, to wait for the settlement of the internal crisis, but link Yugoslavia up with the Axis beforehand. Moreover he did not believe that agreement between Croats and Serbs would be very easy to achieve. There were very extensive demands by the Croats for almost complete autonomy, in which the link with the Old Serbs would only be guaranteed by the personal union of the ruling house, joint foreign policy and joint supreme command of the army (with different Serbian and Croat army groups!) [sentence incomplete].

The situation had changed very much to the disadvantage of the Yugoslavs. The Axis could exert pressure on Yugoslavia through Hungary too. Moreover Yugoslavia had made a request to Germany for a credit of over 200 million without linking this directly and officially with political conditions.<sup>7</sup> He had, nevertheless, hinted unofficially that such a large sum could not be provided until the attitude of the country in foreign policy had been clarified. This situation would have to be explained to the Yugoslavs clearly and forcefully. He (the Field Marshal) intended to speak quite frankly and without reserve to Prince Paul with whom he was well acquainted personally. Yugoslavia would have to join the Axis. Count Ciano enquired about the possibility of Yugoslavia joining the Anti-Comintern Pact. The Field Marshal replied that the present Foreign Minister had given an evasive answer to the question just as Prince Paul had done. For the most part the Yugoslavs pointed out that they were known to be such anti-Bolshevists that it would not be necessary for them now to join the Anti-Comintern Pact as well. The Duce for his part also stressed the necessity of explaining the situation to the Yugoslavs in clear and definite terms. Italy would have an opportunity to do this during the visit of the Yugoslav Ministers to Venice.

Owing to the lateness of the hour the discussion of further questions was then adjourned until 5 p.m. on Sunday April 16.

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<sup>7</sup> See document No. 21.

## No. 206

350/202192-94

*Unsigned Memorandum*

BERLIN, April 15, 1939.

LIST OF REQUIREMENTS OF THE HIGH COMMAND OF THE WEHRMACHT, THE FULFILMENT OF WHICH IS EXPECTED FROM THE SLOVAK GOVERNMENT UNDER THE GERMAN-SLOVAK TREATY OF PROTECTION OF MARCH 23<sup>1</sup> OF THIS YEAR.

1) The military forces of occupation east of the protected zone will be maintained until the removal of Czech arms and Czech war material from the occupied area is completed.

The date of withdrawal will be determined by the High Command of the Wehrmacht.

2) In the protected zone all measures may be adopted by the Wehrmacht which are necessary for the protection of the territory, the troops and important military installations there. The Slovak Government will be informed insofar as special services are required of them.

The following are, *inter alia*, among the sovereign rights [*Hoheitsrechte*] of the Wehrmacht:

Occupation of military and also public and private buildings.

Use of all forms and means of transport.

Use of factories concerned with war economy, including duty-free export.

Duty-free import of all goods and raw materials necessary for the supply of German troops and factories concerned with war economy.

Provision of postal services for German troops and maintenance of the necessary installations.

Telecommunications.

Intelligence Service [*Abwehrdienst*].

3) The regulations for the protected zone (para. 2) apply to the localities: Trenčín, Kupra east of Trenčín, Žilina, Dubníka and Bystrica and also the former Czech ordnance factories in the Waag Valley.<sup>2</sup>

The ordnance factories, as former Czech property, are subject to the same conditions as the State ordnance factories in the Protectorate. Their use etc. is the concern of the Reich.

4) The Slovak Government's own military forces:

Slovakia may not maintain any armed units inside the protected zone.

Pursuant to Article 3 of the Treaty of Protection, the Slovak Government's own military forces will be computed at 1 per cent of the population of the country and incorporated in two or three divisions. The High Command of the Wehrmacht is awaiting proposals from the Slovak

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Woermann's handwriting against this paragraph: "No."

Government on organization (including period of service and employment of reservists), disposition and equipment of these forces, and reserves the allocation of German arms and ammunition (including practice ammunition) until after examination of the proposals.

Until the question of arms and equipment is finally settled, arms now in use up to the maximum required for 3 divisions may be retained. Particulars of this stock, according to numbers and types, are requested as soon as possible.

Efforts will be made to replace them soon with German arms and equipment so as to ensure a regular flow of fresh supplies.

5) German fortified zone in Slovakia.

Slovakia may not maintain any armed units inside the zone, which is bounded by the Moravian-Slovak frontier and by the line laid down in the State Treaty with Slovakia. The para-military formations (Hlinka Guard) in this zone will be permitted to retain their side-arms. In this connection a time-limit for the evacuation of the Slovak armed units might be fixed with the Slovak Government in consultation with Army Group Command 5. The greatest speed is urgently requested.

6) The Slovak Government will make the export and import of war material from and to Slovakia dependent on special permits and will issue or refuse such permits only in agreement with the Reich Government, or the High Command of the Wehrmacht, which is the competent authority within the Reich Government. They will hereby subscribe to the definition of war material valid in the German Reich and will be prepared to arrange for a close supervision of the permit enforcement on their frontiers by the customs authorities. A special agreement for the German-Slovak frontier is reserved for the time being.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Undated marginal note: "A conversation took place today with Tiso, Ďurčanský, Tuka and others in State Secretary von Weizsäcker's office on means of dealing with the requirements. W[oermann]." The conversation referred to by Woermann is evidently the conference of Apr. 19 (document No. 235). A telegram of Apr. 17 from the Consul General and Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia (not printed, 2313/484552) appears to indicate that a copy of this document was sent to him on Apr. 15 and that the OKW's requirements had been communicated to Tiso, who had asked for further discussions whilst declaring that the Slovak Government did not wish to make difficulties.

## No. 207

2446/514900

*Note by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department*

BERLIN, April 15, 1939.

e.o. Kult. A 1386 g.

Note on telegram No. 106 of April 13, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

I have most urgently requested Dr. Henninger of the Volksdeutsche

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 192.

Mittelstelle to see that the German national group in Yugoslavia keeps completely quiet. Herr Henninger said:

1) Herr Halwax would probably be coming to Germany for a year at the end of April on a grant and this would put an end to one source of constant unrest.

2) Dorfmeister, the representative of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle in Graz, would be instructed at once to make it clear to the *Volksdeutsche* in Yugoslavia, especially in the Voivodina, that they must keep quite quiet.

3) The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle would take the necessary steps to cut down still further the local contacts between Styria and Lower Styria in Yugoslavia.

Herr Henninger also said that he could give the most definite assurances that no instructions at all had been issued from Berlin for intensified agitation among the *Volksdeutsche* in Yugoslavia.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary and to Political Division IV for information.

TWARDOWSKI

## No. 208

1848/421071-72

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*

Cypher Letter

By express courier.

BERLIN, April 15, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: In case you have not yet heard, I should like to tell you that Ciano told the Reich Foreign Minister yesterday through Attolico that he would like to meet him soon for a talk. The reply given to Ciano was that Herr von Ribbentrop would also very much welcome an early discussion but, because of arrangements about which you know (Rumanian visit, celebrations for the 20th of this month,<sup>1</sup> Hungarian visit), he could not consider a meeting before the 22nd. Nothing has so far been said about an agenda for this meeting (Gardone was mentioned), it is probable, however, that the somewhat different methods followed by the two Axis Powers in handling the British question prompted Ciano's wish.

Best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

WEIZSÄCKER

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Hitler's birthday.

## No. 209

2951/576551-53

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*<sup>1</sup>

April 15, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: I should like to add to my cypher letter of today<sup>2</sup> that according to my private information a further Hitler-Mussolini meeting is looming on the horizon. It is not for me to express a personal opinion on this but I presume that a serious German-Italian exchange of views might be beneficial. Perhaps the Axis Powers do not assess the situation in precisely similar terms at present, so that an exchange of views would be worth while.

It will be of interest to you that, according to Herr von Ribbentrop's view, not one British soldier would be mobilized in the event of a German-Polish conflict.

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

E. WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The letter is handwritten.<sup>2</sup> Document No. 208.

## No. 210

5570/E398852

*The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department  
to the Legation in Yugoslavia*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, April 16, 1939—1:00 p.m.

No. 101

W 564 g.

From the Air Ministry for the Air Attaché.

As the State Secretary already told the Yugoslav Chargé d'Affaires on April 6,<sup>1</sup> the delivery of 50 bomber aircraft in the months of June, July and August is impossible. Furthermore, as the political prerequisites and general credit conditions have not yet been clarified, nothing definite can at present be said on delivery at a later date either. Final decisions will be made here after the return of the Field Marshal about April 20. The presence of the Air Attaché is desirable at least a few days beforehand.

CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> No memorandum by Weizsäcker recording his conversation of April 6 with Kovačević has been found, but see document No. 176.

## No. 211

06/46693-707

*Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>BERLIN, April 18, 1939.<sup>2</sup>RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN FIELD MARSHAL GÖRING AND  
THE DUCE, IN THE PRESENCE OF COUNT CIANO IN  
ROME ON APRIL 16, 1939.

The first subject of the conversation was the Roosevelt Memorandum,<sup>3</sup> and here Field Marshal Göring expressed the view that one might well gain the impression that Roosevelt was suffering from an incipient mental disease.<sup>4</sup> The Duce raised the question of how to deal with the Roosevelt Memorandum. One could either not reply at all, or else one would have to say "No". Field Marshal Göring replied that, from his first impression of the document, he personally was of the opinion that Roosevelt should not be favoured by the Heads of the Governments with a reply but that the Press should be made to reply in strong terms. The Führer wished to wait for the time being and would be interested to learn the Duce's views on this matter.

The Duce replied that in any case they could wait until after April 20, since the document was not one which required an immediate answer. Moreover he pointed out that the list of the countries to be guaranteed also included Palestine and Syria, territories which were under the jurisdiction of France and Britain. Roosevelt was surely not very well up in his geography.

Continuing, the Duce again emphasized the detailed statements already made in the previous conversation on the subject of relations with Yugoslavia,<sup>5</sup> and then went on to speak of Britain. Italy's relations with that country were bad; only in a purely formal sense were they good. By comparison, however, Italy's feeling towards France was extremely bitter. In reply to a question from the Field Marshal as to whether the Duce believed that France and Britain would hold together under all circumstances, in the event of a conflict, the latter said he was convinced that Britain and France would stand together in any major conflict. One just had to face the fact that it was a real alliance.

In connection with the change in Polish foreign policy as regards the

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum would appear to have been drawn up by the interpreter Schmidt, from whose files it is taken. See document No. 252.

<sup>2</sup> This document is printed, for the reader's convenience, under the date on which the conversation took place.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 200.

<sup>4</sup> See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry for Apr. 15, 1939.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 205.

attitude of that country towards Germany, which Field Marshal Göring emphasized, the conversation then turned to Russia. In this connection the Field Marshal referred to Stalin's speech at the last Conference of the Communist Party,<sup>6</sup> in which Stalin had stated that the Russians would not allow themselves to be used as cannon fodder for the capitalist Powers. He (the Field Marshal) would ask the Führer whether it would not be possible to put out feelers cautiously to Russia through certain intermediaries with a view to a *rapprochement* so as to cause Poland anxiety over Russia as well.

The Duce welcomed this idea most warmly and said that in Italy too they had had similar ideas for some time and, without saying anything definite, had also already adopted a more friendly tone towards the Russians through the Italian Ambassador in Moscow<sup>7</sup> in connection with economic negotiations, a gesture which had met with a very keen response from Potemkin, the State Secretary in the Russian Foreign Ministry.

On this point Count Ciano said that the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who had often failed to call on him for months on end, had called on him twice in one week in a very friendly manner, apparently in this very connection.

The Duce stated that a *rapprochement* between the Axis Powers and Russia was naturally dependent on the attitude Japan would adopt. If Japan had no objections to such matters, this *rapprochement* could, as Count Ciano had already stated, be effected with comparative ease. The object of such a *rapprochement* would be to induce Russia to react coolly and unfavourably to Britain's efforts at encirclement, on the lines of Stalin's aforementioned speech, and to take up a neutral position. That would make a very great impression in the democratic world. The Axis Powers could tell the Russians that they had no intention of attacking Russia. Since Bolshevism was not tolerated in Italy and Germany, Russia would naturally not be expected to tolerate National Socialism and Fascism within her own territory. Moreover in their ideological struggle against plutocracy and capitalism the Axis Powers had to a certain extent the same objectives as the Russian régime. It was, however, important to know what Germany's attitude towards the Ukraine was.

In reply to the Duce's last question, the Field Marshal said that, according to statements by the Führer, Germany had no designs whatsoever on the Ukraine, and that ever since he had been a member of the Cabinet he (the Field Marshal) had not set eyes on a single document dealing with the Ukraine and that the whole question had only been raised in British newspapers for propaganda purposes against Germany. Only recently the Führer had told the Field Marshal again

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Augusto Rosso.

that he had no designs whatsoever on the Ukraine. It was moreover interesting to note that there had been absolutely no further mention of Russia in the Führer's latest speeches. Any declaration of neutrality on the part of Russia would in any case not fail to make a deep impression on Poland and the Western Powers. If Russia declared her neutrality Poland would then not lift a finger in a general conflict.

In reply to a question by the Duce, the Field Marshal went on to say that, of the 35 million inhabitants of Poland, only 14 million were real Poles. Poland's air armaments were not particularly good and consisted mostly of obsolete French and British aircraft. The Polish artillery dated for the most part from the war.

In the event of the Axis Powers reaching a decision to seek a *rap-prochement* with Russia, the Duce thought that Italy's method might be through a trade treaty with Russia. The Field Marshal also referred to the Russian desire to expand the scope of the Russo-German economic treaty.<sup>8</sup> If Germany gave her consent to this, talks with Russia would be possible immediately. The Duce considered the matter to be important because Britain was also making advances to the Russians at the moment.

Referring to the political situation, the Duce declared that he considered a general war to be unavoidable. He merely wondered when would be the most favourable time for the Axis Powers and who should seize the initiative for such a war.

Field Marshal Göring was of the opinion that the Axis Powers ought to wait a little longer until their armaments had reached a more favourable stage in relation to those of the democracies. The Duce repeated in more precise terms his question as to the most favourable time for such a conflict, whereupon Field Marshal Göring pointed out that in the years 1942/43 the ratio of armaments between Germany and Britain would be appreciably more favourable, especially in the naval sphere, and that France's rearmament would be hampered by shortage of manpower so that even now the whole emphasis of French preparations was already placed on defence.

"What ought we to do until the time is favourable for a general conflict?" the Duce then asked. Field Marshal Göring replied that the Axis Powers must rearm to the teeth and should even now place themselves in a state of mobilization. Germany had already done this. All measures taken by him (Field Marshal Göring) were based on the assumption that mobilization was already in progress even if it had not yet been proclaimed publicly. There were only three factors restricting German rearmament: productive capacity, the supply of raw materials and the available labour. In no circumstances would Germany abandon, for financial reasons, a defence measure which she regarded as necessary.

<sup>8</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 478, 479, 481-491, and 495.



The Duce agreed that the same applied to Italy and summed up his impression of the discussion to the effect that the Axis Powers still needed two to three years in order to join in a general conflict well-armed and with the prospect of victory.

Field Marshal Göring referred to the importance of Tunisia. Once Italy had conquered Tunisia, Britain's position in the Mediterranean would be finished. Malta was doubtless very troublesome to Italy, and the Duce agreed, saying that in British hands this island constituted a threat to Italy. He (the Duce) was moreover of the opinion that the warlike mood of the Western Powers would soon blow over if the Axis countries lay low and undertook no further action for the time being. In this connection Field Marshal Göring stressed the importance of the United States to public opinion the world over. Things could become very different there also if Roosevelt were no longer President, and his prospects of re-election were, without doubt, none too good. By means of her good connections with South America, Italy could certainly successfully counteract American influence in that continent. The Duce agreed with this, but mentioned that, for some reason which he could not quite understand, Italy's relations with Argentina were not particularly good.

The Duce also expressed his satisfaction at the visit of the German Navy to Spain,<sup>9</sup> of which he was informed by the Field Marshal, who moreover considered it very important for Italy and Germany to be in perfect accord regarding their further intentions in Spain, particularly in the economic sphere, since there was no point in both countries competing with each other there. Germany hoped furthermore that Italy would remain in the Balearics.

Count Ciano stated in this connection that there was a secret treaty with Franco, under which, in the event of a general conflict, Italy would be granted air bases not only in the Balearics but also in other parts of Spain. Field Marshal Göring described the fortification of the Balearics as being of the utmost importance, since it could be assumed that in the event of a general conflict France would immediately occupy these islands. The Duce stated that Italy, too, would occupy the Balearics with the utmost speed, but nevertheless admitted that the fortification of these islands would relieve the situation in the first days of the conflict.

Field Marshal Göring pointed out that it might be sufficient to place guns, not of the latest design, at the disposal of the Spaniards, since, in the case of the Balearics, it would always be a matter of close defence against an opponent attempting to land on the islands and

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<sup>9</sup> In despatches of Apr. 11 (not printed, 8424/E592996-98) the Foreign Ministry notified the Embassy in Spain and the Legation in Portugal that German naval units under the command of Admiral Boehm would be visiting Spanish and Portuguese harbours while on a training cruise.

that, therefore, long-range artillery would not be required to ward him off.

Count Ciano replied that Italy had delivered a fairly large amount of artillery to Spain but so far had not received any payment for it. He described the costs falling on Italy from the Spanish Civil War as being very high.

With reference to Turkey Field Marshal Göring stated, in reply to a question from the Duce, that he knew very little about the country and merely had the general impression that British influence was very great. The Duce and Count Ciano held divergent views about Egypt. Count Ciano maintained that King Farouk was anti-British, while the Duce cast doubts on this, speaking in German—apparently so that Count Ciano should not understand him. The conversation then turned to the Arab question. The Duce expressed the view that, by anti-British propaganda among the Arabs, the Axis Powers could probably achieve a state of tension, but not a revolution. In the event of war, however, the prospects of fomenting an Arab uprising would be more favourable. Since Italy's Albanian venture the Arabs were certainly rather doubtful—so the Duce said—as to his role of Protector, which he had assumed symbolically with the Sword of Islam.<sup>10</sup>

Count Ciano then explained how Italy was aiding the Arabs. Direct supplies of arms were too risky; Italy was therefore giving them money and they had so far always succeeded in buying arms through Greek middlemen with the help of the funds thus received. The British, however, had now barred the way to Palestine so thoroughly that direct imports were impossible. But the import of arms was easier by the roundabout route across Syria.

In reply to the Duce's question as to where, in the Field Marshal's opinion, the present critical points for the possible outbreak of a conflict lay, the Field Marshal said that in his view these were Poland and Tunisia, to which the Duce at once replied that in that case there was only one critical spot, namely Poland, as Italy did not intend to take any action against France for two to three years. The Field Marshal said that his statement about Poland was to be interpreted as meaning that more serious difficulties might arise only if the German minority in Poland were very badly treated and the prestige of the Third Reich abroad thus jeopardized. The Führer had told him (the Field Marshal) that he was not planning anything against Poland.

The Duce then finally turned to the discussion of economic questions and described the "synchronization of Italy's and Germany's endeavours towards autarky" as one of the chief tasks in the economic sphere. This met with the full agreement of the Field Marshal, who proposed issuing the appropriate instructions to the economic authorities.

<sup>10</sup> The "Sword of Islam" was presented to Mussolini outside Tripoli on Mar. 18, 1937. See vol. v of this Series, document No. 564.

At the conclusion of the conversation, the results of the Rome discussions were summed up by the Field Marshal and the Duce as follows:

Yugoslavia: Friendly attitude while waiting for further developments in the internal policy of this country and with the prerequisite of Yugoslavia adopting a clear pro-Axis line. Germany to recognize Croatia as being purely in the Italian sphere of influence.

Russia: Germany and Italy ought to endeavour to play the so-called *petit jeu* with this country. Possibilities for a *rapprochement* existed.

Spain: Germany and Italy would continue to aid Franco, especially in the economic reconstruction of his country, in order to enable him to maintain a strong attitude towards other countries. He would, of course, be expected to adopt a definite pro-Axis line, a line which the Duce believed he could expect of him as a "loyal" man.

General situation: Germany and Italy will not allow themselves to be provoked into a conflict but will await what they consider to be the right moment. They will continue to build up their armaments and, with a view to joint action later, will enter into discussions regarding the synchronization of their autarky and also cooperation between their air and naval forces. In the meantime they will continue the "press war" most vigorously, but otherwise will not undertake anything on a larger scale. (When the Field Marshal mentioned in this connection that Germany had quite recently acquired a number of territories and needed peace to digest them, the Duce agreed most emphatically.) "Talk of peace and prepare for war, i.e., victory" should be the motto for action of both countries.

The above summary was once more read out by me in French at the Duce's request and met with the approval of those participating in the conversation.

In conclusion the Duce also observed that both countries would maintain a firm attitude and calm outlook and would disdainfully brush aside all the stupid attempts to discover signs of disunity between the Axis Powers.

## No. 212

2943/570005

### *The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 35 of April 17

HELSINKI, April 17, 1939—2:50 p.m.

Received April 17—5:55 p.m.

Pol. VI 1027.

The Foreign Minister has learned from Stockholm of the German-Swedish special negotiations about the Aaland Islands,<sup>1</sup> and assumes

<sup>1</sup> See also documents Nos. 127, 145 and 187.

that, in them, Germany will make her consent to Swedish special rights dependent on an assurance of Sweden's neutrality. He seems to agree in principle with such a solution. From other sources, however, the Foreign Minister hears that the Russian Baltic fleet, including aircraft-carriers, is to sail from Leningrad on April 21.<sup>2</sup> In view of the tense situation the Foreign Minister is considering proposing to the President that, unless the question of the Aaland Islands can be settled within two days by the course followed so far, they should find some other way of safeguarding this group of islands. The Foreign Minister would not disclose more of his plans to me.

BLÜCHER

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<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 40 of Apr. 18 (not printed, 2943/570006) Blücher reported that soundings made at the Finnish General Staff on the allegedly imminent sailing of the Russian fleet had shown that no such report had been given to the Foreign Minister from that quarter.

## No. 213

2422/511973-74

### *Circular of the Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup>*

#### Telegram

MOST URGENT  
IMMEDIATE  
PRIORITY

BERLIN, April 17, 1939—2:00 p.m.  
Pol. IX 678.

Included among the countries for which Roosevelt, in his message to the Führer,<sup>2</sup> suggests an assurance by Germany that German forces will neither attack nor invade is (relevant country to be inserted according to the appendix). You are requested to put the following questions orally but in a formal manner to the Foreign Minister there at once, if at all possible today:

- 1) whether (insert name of country) feels herself in any way threatened by Germany,
- 2) whether the Government there had authorized Roosevelt to make his proposal or had in any other way actuated it.

Please send an answer at once by telegram.

For your personal information only, I wish to state that we are addressing these questions to the Governments of all countries mentioned by Roosevelt with the exception of Britain, France and their

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions at: Helsinki No. 49, Tallinn No. 38, Riga No. 57, Kovno No. 40, Stockholm No. 49, Oslo No. 35, Copenhagen No. 58, The Hague No. 44, Brussels No. 59, Lisbon No. 78, San Sebastian No. 259, Berne No. 44, Luxembourg No. 20, Budapest No. 125, Bucharest No. 163, Belgrade No. 102, Sofia No. 54, Ankara No. 85, Teheran No. 56 (2422/511975). This telegram was sent to Athens as No. 53 on Apr. 18 (2422/511976-77).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 200.

satellites, and also of Poland and Russia. We are in no doubt that both questions will be answered in the negative, but nevertheless we should, for special reasons, like to have authentic confirmation at once. I request you to hold appropriate language in your *démarche*. We assume that the Foreign Minister there will be in a position, and also prepared, to make a statement accordingly without further ado.

Only for 12 (Berne): Your question should include Liechtenstein also.<sup>3</sup>

RIBBENTROP

<sup>3</sup> Marginal notes: "To be resubmitted immediately after despatch (Iraq, Arabia and Egypt) (Foreign Minister's Secretariat)." "B[rückmeier]". This telegram was sent to the Legations at Cairo and Bagdad (also covering Saudi Arabia) on Apr. 19 (2422/511978-79).

## No. 214

8913/E622170

### *The Minister in Latvia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 46 of April 17

RIGA, April 17, 1939—10:47 p.m.

Received April 17—11:40 p.m.

Pol. IX 709.

With reference to your telegram No. 57.<sup>1</sup>

Munters received me at once. I put to him questions 1 and 2, and spoke in accordance with the last paragraph. He replied that in answer to 2 he could state at once that Latvia had neither directly nor indirectly authorized Roosevelt to make his proposal. The fact that he was still ignorant of the official text of Roosevelt's message made it difficult for him to answer question 1. He felt he was being asked to make a general statement without knowing whether this question was inspired by an assumption in Roosevelt's message that a threat existed or for what purpose Latvia's answer was to be used in this duel of political tactics. At this moment, he particularly regretted that his earlier suggestions for a German-Latvian non-aggression pact had met with so little response.<sup>2</sup> He was expecting the text of the message tomorrow and would then, after the Cabinet meeting which was due to be held in any case, give me a definite answer to 1 also.

KOTZE

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 213.

<sup>2</sup> No evidence of these suggestions has been found, but see vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 354 and 385.

## No. 215

485/231609-10

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 339

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

For the first time since he assumed charge of his post here<sup>1</sup> the Russian Ambassador called on me today to discuss official matters. He expatiated on a subject which he alleged to be of special interest to him, namely the execution of certain contracts for delivery of war material by the Skoda works. Although the material concerned is obviously somewhat unimportant the Ambassador wanted to make the fulfilment of the contracts a test case to show whether, as recently stated to him by Ministerialdirektor Wiehl, we were really desirous of cultivating our economic relations with Russia and of extending them also. The matter of these supply contracts is followed up elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

Towards the end of the discussion I threw in a remark to the Ambassador that, even given good will on our side, the atmosphere was not exactly favourable at the present moment for making deliveries of war material to Soviet Russia owing to reports of a Russian-Anglo-French air pact and such like. M. Merekalov took advantage of this interjection to pass on to politics. He asked about the views held here on the present situation in Central Europe. When I said to him that Germany was, to my knowledge, the only country which was not joining in the present sabre-rattling in Europe, he asked me about our relations with Poland and about alleged military clashes on the German-Polish frontier. After I had denied the latter and made a few fairly dispassionate remarks on German-Polish relations, the Russian Ambassador asked me point-blank what I thought of German-Russian relations.

I replied to M. Merekalov that, as was well known, we had always wished to live in a mutually satisfactory condition of economic exchange with Russia. Recently the Russian press appeared to me not to have lent their full support to the anti-German tone adopted by the American, and partly also by the British, newspapers. As regards the German press, M. Merekalov doubtless scrutinized it closely and could form an opinion for himself.

The Ambassador then spoke somewhat as follows: Russian policy had always followed a straight course. Ideological differences of opinion had had very little adverse effect on relations between Russia and Italy and need not disturb those with Germany either. Russia

<sup>1</sup> Alexei Merekalov. He presented his credentials to Hitler on July 13, 1938. See also vol. IV of this Series, chapter VI.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 217.

had not exploited the present friction between Germany and the Western Democracies against us, neither did she wish to do that. As far as Russia was concerned there was no reason why she should not live on a normal footing with us, and out of normal relations could grow increasingly improved relations.

With this remark, towards which he had been steering the conversation, M. Merekalov ended the talk. He intends to visit Moscow in a day or two.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 216

2185/472228

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 340

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

Ambassador von Mackensen told me by telephone this afternoon, after he had spoken to Count Ciano, that even now Rome is still inclined to deal with the Roosevelt telegram<sup>1</sup> through the press only. This telegram is, by its very nature, considered more as a comic document of mental aberration, and not as a diplomatic document to be taken at all seriously.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 200.

## No. 217

103/111293

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 342

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

The Russian Ambassador called on me today and handed me the enclosed *Note Verbale* together with the memorandum.<sup>1</sup> He stated that he would be obliged to leave for Moscow in the next few days and would attach great importance to receiving a reply either orally or in writing by then. The fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the Russian contracts with the Skoda works, which incidentally were not of such great material importance, was the touchstone for Germany's real intentions regarding the maintenance or further extension of Russo-German economic relations. The Ambassador had personally taken a great deal of trouble over this economic question and regarded the present business with the Skoda works as a personal and important matter.

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<sup>1</sup> Neither found.

Not being acquainted with the details, I first told the Ambassador that I could not imagine that there was any discrimination against Russia; it was probably because of the military occupation of the present Protectorate territory that all Skoda deliveries had been held up. Naturally the Protectorate territory had by now been incorporated in the German national economy to such an extent that current private contracts by firms in the Protectorate territory might have to undergo some modification. Nevertheless I was prepared to assume that the matter had an economic aspect in which I should be glad to take an interest. I was unable to make any promises apart from assuring him that it would be dealt with speedily.

Herewith together with *Note Verbale* to the Director of the Economic Policy Department with the request that I should be kept informed of further developments.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 218

2450/515297

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 349

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

The Bulgarian Ministers Kozhukharov and Bozhilov,<sup>1</sup> accompanied by the Bulgarian Minister,<sup>2</sup> today asked that I too should take steps to see that, in the present threatening situation, Germany should immediately deliver to Bulgaria complete equipment for two divisions, preferably from stocks of war material found by us in Czecho-Slovakia. They countered the objection that we only sold arms for foreign currency in cash by saying that we only received such currency in cash from our opponents, who would then turn the guns against us.

I promised the gentlemen to give the matter my personal attention.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Ministers of Commerce and of Finance respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Parvan Draganov.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "45 m[illion] credit. R[ibbentrop]." A note from Erich Kordt to the State Secretary dated Apr. 18 (2450/515298) reads: "The Foreign Minister informed me that he had recommended that the credit to be granted the Bulgarians be raised to 45 million. He is of the opinion that the arms in question should then be set against the credit to be made available." See also document No. 63.

## No. 219

169/82582

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 350

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister today asked me rhetorically about a possible German frontier guarantee for Rumania, about which there were at



present rumours in the press, and for which the Rumanian Foreign Minister would doubtless ask us.

I answered the Minister by saying that we had no intention of following the British model of promising guarantees to all and sundry.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 220

1535/383082-33

### *Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

e.o. Pol. II 1237.

The British Chargé d'Affaires<sup>1</sup> called on me today without making any particular request so that I had the impression that he was only beating about the bush to obtain information on our attitude here. Of his own accord he described the British encirclement policy and the inclusion of the Soviet Union in it as the chief cause for complaint which, in his view, Germany had against the British Government. In his reports he had repeatedly pointed this out to the Foreign Office and he would be grateful if I could confirm this as being my opinion too. I replied that it was not difficult for me to give this confirmation and said that the British Government by their nervous policy, which was completely incomprehensible to me, were well on the way to destroying completely the friendly feelings existing among the German people for Britain.

I did not answer his question about our probable attitude to Roosevelt's message.<sup>2</sup> He himself gave me to understand that he regarded it as a clumsy piece of diplomacy.

Sir George then proceeded to unburden himself at some length on the question of why Germany had not solved the problem of Danzig and the Corridor last winter before proceeding to the final settlement of the Czech question. To his mind the solution of the first question would have surely been incomparably more important for Germany, as, after Munich, the Czech problem no longer represented any danger for Germany.

In conclusion he broached the question of the Ambassador and said he hoped that, in a month or two, either the present Ambassador or a new one would come here<sup>3</sup>—several times he mentioned the possibility of a new Ambassador.

I told him that if the British Government intended to send their Ambassador back here soon, I could only advise him not to make the

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Ogilvie-Forbes.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 200.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Nevile Henderson had been recalled to London on Mar. 17. See document No. 16.

whole question of the Ambassador the subject of a press controversy in Britain but to let Sir Nevile Henderson return here as quietly and unobtrusively as possible. This course seemed reasonable to the *Chargé d'Affaires*, yet he expressed the hope that the return of the British Ambassador would not be exploited by the German press as a form of retreat on Britain's part.

BISMARCK

## No. 221

33/25818-20

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.

In connection with the conversations which have been taking place on the occasion of the visit of M. Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, to London,<sup>2</sup> about the conclusion of the Anglo-Polish Pact of Assistance, the question has already assumed importance of how the Rumanian-Polish Alliance,<sup>3</sup> hitherto directed only against Soviet Russia, could be made effective also against an attack from the West. M. Beck promised in London to open discussions on this question with the Rumanian Government. Independently of these Polish-Rumanian conversations, however, the British and French Governments also again raised the question in Bucharest in early April of including Rumania in the anti-German group of Powers,<sup>4</sup> by offering the Rumanian Government a guarantee of independence, provided Rumania:

- 1) actually offered resistance to any attack,
- 2) agreed to a reshaping of the Polish-Rumanian Alliance on the lines mentioned above, and
- 3) kept the British and French Governments constantly informed of any dangers threatening Rumania.

In reply to this proposal, the Rumanian Government first of all sent Cretzianu, Secretary General of the Rumanian Foreign Ministry, to London and Paris,<sup>5</sup> allegedly because they felt that the handling of this problem by the Minister in London, Tilea, alone, was insufficient.

While M. Cretzianu was in London for this purpose, the events in Albania occurred and gave rise in London to the idea of immediately including Greece among the number of countries to be guaranteed. Once this decision was taken the British Government were faced with the necessity of making an immediate announcement in the session of

<sup>1</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "From Senior Counsellor Heinburg to the State Secretary 18/4."

<sup>2</sup> From April 3 to 7; see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, chapter 1.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 389 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, Nos. 538, 561 and 587.

<sup>5</sup> See also *ibid.*, vol. v, Nos. 37 and 65.

the House of Commons called for April 13.<sup>6</sup> According to reports available it appears that the French Government insisted that, irrespective of the result of the talks with Cretzianu, Rumania should also be included forthwith in the declaration of guarantee which was to be made. There seems at first to have been opposition to this in London presumably because Rumania had not yet given a satisfactory answer to the conditions put to her. Even on the morning of April 13 there was obviously some doubt in London whether Chamberlain's statement on the guarantee in the House of Commons would also be extended to Rumania. This seems to have taken place only after renewed and urgent French intervention on the lines that, in Paris, giving a guarantee to Greece was obviously being made dependent on the inclusion of Rumania in the joint Anglo-French guarantee. In this way, the statements of the Rumanians that they had not entered into any discussions on a pact and that the declaration of assistance was a spontaneous act on the part of the British and French might be correct.

Reports on the conversations which Gafencu, the Rumanian Foreign Minister, had with the Turkish Foreign Minister in Istanbul on April 8 and 9 did not yield a very clear picture. The main point seems to have been the question of the guarantees which the Balkan Pact would offer Rumania in the event of an attack by a third Power. Reports on whether the question of British and French warships passing through the Dardanelles to protect Rumania was discussed, are contradictory. The information that on this occasion Rumania proposed a Rumanian-Turkish-Soviet Russian Pact<sup>7</sup> appears doubtful, especially as it came from a Bulgarian source; it can in any case be noted that both Bulgaria and Hungary show a certain tendency to be suspicious of Gafencu's intentions towards us so that it might be apposite to treat reports from that quarter with certain reservations.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 189.

<sup>7</sup> In telegram No. 102 of Apr. 13 (not printed, 2771/536884) Kroll reported from Ankara that Saracoğlu had told the Bulgarian Minister that Gafencu had proposed the conclusion of a Rumanian-Turkish-Soviet alliance. Saracoğlu had refused to discuss the matter on the grounds that it concerned the Turkish Grand National Assembly alone.

## No. 222

2981/584302-03

*Consul-General Wiedemann to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

Personal

SAN FRANCISCO, April 17, 1939.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: I am sending you herewith a copy of a report<sup>1</sup> which I have submitted to the Embassy. I want specially

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (B21/B005041-43). This report is dated Apr. 17. Weidemann reported on a series of functions which he attended after having assumed charge of his post. He doubted whether the German element in America could be counted upon in a crisis.

to point out the last paragraph of my report: We have again lost some ground, but we can also regain some.

The position in San Francisco is this:

As the Führer's former Adjutant, I personally am at present the focus of conversation in society. It happens that the house which I rent stands opposite the most exclusive club—the Burlingame County Club. The "Burlingame Set" is one of the most influential circles of San Francisco. The older members, who have Jewish connections through the De Young family, regard me with complete disfavour; the younger members, however, for the most part are consumed with curiosity to become acquainted with "this Nazi". (As one young lady said: "I'm just dying to get to know him; he's got such a lovely car, too.") Or again, in a morning paper there was a remark about me which was not even unfriendly, and in the afternoon, the wife of a naval officer whom I did not know called on me, and invited me to a cocktail party in order to introduce me to her friends and show that the attack on me was considered "unfair".

I have come into indirect contact with President Hoover and with Hearst.<sup>2</sup> Both men apparently have certain doubts about receiving me at present.

If one wishes to promote German interests here one must gain entry to influential American circles. If I can maintain myself socially at the same level—which I will be able to do with the help of the funds promised me—I shall certainly succeed in time. In the end curiosity will get the better of people; they will send me invitations and will come to my house, if only to see how I live. When people see that they can associate with me and talk to me, they will end up by saying: "If people like him were in the Führer's close entourage for a long time, then the Nazis can't be so bad after all." (Please excuse me if I put myself to the fore so much. Here, however, I am not just plain Mr. W. but the former Adjutant of the Führer.)

I would like to tell you something else which you probably know already: Karl von Wiegand,<sup>3</sup> to whom I talked in Berlin shortly before my departure, said to me at the time: "The Führer must clearly understand that President Roosevelt is his most dangerous opponent. President Roosevelt fights for his democratic aims with the same fanatic idealism as does the Führer for National Socialism. Britain and France are no longer dragging America behind them: today America is driving them both before her." I have met many Americans here who have corroborated this view.

I also venture to conclude this letter on the note of optimism that, within certain limits, much can be achieved here. If all goes well I

<sup>2</sup> William Randolph Hearst, editor and proprietor of the Hearst Press, a chain of American newspapers and periodicals.

<sup>3</sup> Hearst press correspondent in Berlin.

shall succeed here and, if I do not exactly win sympathy for Germany, I shall at least gain the esteem of many people.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

F. WIEDEMANN

## No. 223

6363/E490299-300

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 126 of April 18

WASHINGTON, April 17, 1939—8:42 p.m.

Received April 19—6:10 a.m.

W VIIIa 915.

With reference to your telegrams No. 119 of April 15<sup>1</sup> and No. 120 of April 17.<sup>2</sup>

1) As a result of renewed and urgent representations by interested parties the Customs Office has promised a Government order which will be announced in the next few days and which will exempt approved import transactions undertaken against dollars or free Reichsmarks from payment of 25 per cent additional duty. In doing this the Customs Office wishes to make certain that in all circumstances no indirect subsidy will be paid either before or after by the sale of American raw materials in Germany or elsewhere. The release of German exports paid for by dividends—and other original blocked accounts—will not be permitted for the time being, as so far the Customs Office has not arrived at a satisfactory solution for the formulation of the necessary directives. Nor are pure barter transactions exempt from additional duty for the present.

2) I agree with the view of the interested parties that negotiations between the Embassy and the Treasury in accordance with telegram No. 119<sup>1</sup> should be postponed for a few days, until the forthcoming Government order has been announced, as a proposal to that effect by the Embassy would introduce a new factor into the negotiations, which have so far been difficult enough, and would cause a postponement of the Government order. Applications so far lodged by interested parties for the exemption of all import deliveries arriving after April 22, in so far as they constitute deliveries under contracts concluded before March 18, have been categorically turned down by the Treasury on the grounds of the legally fixed term of thirty days.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 157, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (4992/E281734). In this telegram Clodius proposed that Counsellor of Legation Tannenbergh should come to Berlin and enquired whether he could be dispensed with in Washington.

3) According to the above it would seem expedient to send Counsellor of Legation Tannenberg or the Commercial Attaché for discussions to Berlin only if negotiations with the Treasury have led to a satisfactory result, and if it is established beyond doubt under what conditions the Treasury approves barter, blocked marks and combined transactions.

THOMSEN

## No. 224

129/120863

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Portugal*

Telegram

No. 81

BERLIN, April 18, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. III g.

According to a communication from the Spanish Government to Ambassador von Stohrer,<sup>1</sup> the Spanish Ambassador in Lisbon has been instructed to sound the Portuguese Government cautiously regarding Portugal's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact. We have no objections to this step. In common with Italy and Japan we feel in principle that official invitations to accede should emanate from the three original signatory Powers. We intend for the time being to await the results of the Spanish feelers and then if need be consult Japan and Italy regarding further steps. Please refrain therefore from making any further moves with the Portuguese Government until further notice.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Reported in a despatch from Madrid of Apr. 13 (not printed, 462/225650).

## No. 225

1818/416249-51

*The Embassy in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P V 18

WARSAW, April 18, 1939.  
Received April 19 a.m.  
Pol. V 3358.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Statements by Foreign Minister Beck on his London visit.

During the last few days Foreign Minister Beck has received a number of diplomats to inform them of the results of his London visit.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Apr. 3 to 7.

According to the reports which have reached the Embassy on the subject, especially from the Hungarians, Japanese, and Italians, M. Beck expressed himself somewhat on these lines:

The Anglo-Polish Declaration of Guarantee could in no way be regarded as an attempt to encircle Germany. He, Beck, had been forced to conclude the London agreement by Polish public opinion, which, as was well known, was overwhelmingly anti-German, but which had now considerably calmed down. His intention in London had merely been to restore the balance *vis-à-vis* the Reich, in continuation of his policy hitherto. He wished to state with special emphasis that Poland had not entered into any collective grouping in London. Above all he had refused the British request that the Soviet Union be included, a refusal which had been by no means easy. Similarly he had not acceded to the British proposal to strengthen the Polish-Rumanian alliance, pointing out that this question would have to form the subject of direct negotiations between Poland and Rumania.

On the details of the Polish-British Agreement, M. Beck is said to have spoken somewhat as follows:

In London a provisional oral agreement was made which was not committed to paper in any form, not even in the form of a minute. The further details were to be settled through diplomatic channels. Its subject matter corresponded to the Franco-Polish Treaty of Mutual Guarantee made at Locarno in 1925.<sup>2</sup> Its character was in no way aggressive, but its object was to prevent the presentation of *faits accomplis* by third Powers. Thus, as in the case of the Franco-Polish Agreements of 1921 and 1925, it did not in any way run counter to the agreements with neighbouring States. In particular it did not conflict either in spirit or letter with the German-Polish Declaration of 1934.

To the Italian Ambassador M. Beck especially emphasized his willingness to continue the policy of an understanding with Germany, and he stated that he still had the fullest confidence in the Führer. The Italian Ambassador<sup>3</sup> is of opinion that the fact that the Foreign Minister has decided not to make his originally planned visit to Paris shows a desire to avoid putting a further strain on German-Polish relations.<sup>4</sup>

KRÜMMER

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 188, footnote 2.

<sup>3</sup> Pietro Arone, Barone di Valentino.

<sup>4</sup> This document bears in the margin the initial: R[ibbentrop].

## No. 226

2767/535861-63

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

A 740

ANKARA, April 18, 1939.

Pol. II 1296.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Turkey and British attempts at encirclement.

With reference to my previous report.<sup>1</sup>

When Foreign Minister Saracoğlu informed me on the 13th of this month<sup>1</sup> that the British Ambassador here had not mentioned Turkey in his statement on the intended declaration of guarantee for Greece, he added that the world would certainly be surprised to learn that Turkey had rejected the British attempts to incorporate her in the ranks of the guaranteed States. M. Saracoğlu may have been right in this assumption; for even on April 12, that is, the day before the House of Commons statement,<sup>2</sup> *The Times* had described the extension of the British guarantee to Turkey as a matter of course, just as, during the previous weeks, correspondents of British and French news agencies and newspapers in Turkey had always reported.

But both in political and diplomatic circles here, and even among the Turks themselves, Turkey's attitude has caused surprise, and in British and other hostile circles grave disappointment. It had really been thought that Turkey, who for years had been on friendly, and even cordial terms with Britain would be particularly easy game for the attempts at encirclement. Furthermore no stone had been left unturned to include amongst those arrayed against us this very country which is of decisive importance because of its domination of the Straits, that vitally important link in the planned encirclement of Germany. I assume that the Turkish-British conversations about this were conducted primarily through the Turkish Ambassador in London, since the British Ambassador here, as can be seen from my telegrams,<sup>3</sup> confined himself to two *démarches*, namely those of March 18 and April 12.<sup>4</sup> That British pressure was very strong and that it apparently still continues was confirmed to me by Numan's statement today to the effect that Turkey found herself obliged to make it clear in London that there was no intention here of endangering the friendly relations with Germany, and the, after all, correct relations with Italy, by an unsolicited declaration of guarantee on the part of Britain.

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 101 of Apr. 13 (not printed, 7637/E545402).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 189.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 134, footnote 2, and footnote 1 above.

<sup>4</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. iv, No. 407 and vol. v, Nos. 128, 138 and 149.



There is no doubt that the Turkish decision was not the result of special understanding or sympathy for Germany's action in Bohemia and Moravia, still less for Italy's action in Albania. On the contrary, as can also be seen from a cross-section of the Turkish press, these two actions probably found approval among only very few Turks. This of course is particularly true of Italy's action in Albania. The attitude of the Turkish Government was determined rather by cold and sober considerations. The desire here is, as long as it is at all possible, to adhere to the line of strictest neutrality in face of the struggle between the groups of Great Powers in Europe, as such an attitude best serves Turkey's well-understood interests.

In the numerous conversations which I have had in the last few weeks with the Foreign Minister and Numan, the State Secretary, I have repeatedly and emphatically told them that even the slightest deviation from this course would be regarded by us as defection to the opposite camp and as a breach of Turkey's solemn assurances to us, a breach which could not fail to have dire consequences not only for political but naturally also for economic and other relations between Germany and Turkey. In these conversations I had the impression that Greater Germany's economic importance to Turkey, which had considerably increased after the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia, has been a decisive factor in determining the Turkish Government to maintain reserve towards the British manoeuvres.

Italy's action against Albania seemed, for a short time, to make the Turkish Government falter in their hitherto consistent and clear attitude, as it was regarded, not as an isolated action, but as the beginning of the Italian offensive against the Balkans directed at a break-through to the Aegean. Reports, circulated simultaneously by the British and French, on considerable Italian troop reinforcements in the Dodecanese and in Rhodes further contributed towards intensifying the already grave mood here. It was only after the Italian guarantee of Greece<sup>5</sup> and after people had been convinced of the falsity of the reports of alleged troop reinforcements in the Dodecanese that a slight *détente* set in. In spite of this the eyes of the Turks are turned with increased watchfulness on every move by Italy. There can be no doubt that further action by Rome in the Balkans or perhaps in Syria would inevitably drive Turkey into the ranks of our opponents, just as on the other hand, a clear statement by Italy (somewhat on the lines of that given to Greece) that Italian policy in the Balkans and the Near East has no territorial ambitions would considerably strengthen

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<sup>5</sup> On Apr. 10 the Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Greece, on behalf of Mussolini, made a communication to the Greek Government which gave categorical assurances that Italy intended to respect absolutely the territorial and insular integrity of Greece. This communication and the Greek reply were published in the Italian press on Apr. 12. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 118 and 141.

the Turkish Government in their hitherto neutral attitude and would render very much more difficult the intensive efforts to be expected from our opponents to draw this country into their orbit.

KROLL

## No. 227

P14/084-104

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, April 18, 1939.

#### RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND M. GAFENCU, THE RUMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, IN BERLIN ON APRIL 18, 1939<sup>1</sup>

After a few words of welcome by the Reich Foreign Minister, M. Gafencu replied that he regarded his visit to Berlin as a further step on the way towards a *rapprochement* between the two countries, a course which he had consistently followed since he took over office. One stage in this course had been completed by the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty.<sup>2</sup> In the name of Rumania he declared that his country was firmly resolved to carry out this Treaty honourably and loyally.

The Reich Foreign Minister declared that he himself had advocated German-Rumanian collaboration in previous years, particularly in the economic field, and that therefore he, too, was glad of the opportunity of making progress in that direction. To facilitate a general understanding of the situation he then gave the Rumanian Foreign Minister an exhaustive account of the German view of political developments since Versailles, with special reference to the most recent events. In view of the fact that the German people had been completely ruined politically and economically by the Treaty of Versailles, the Führer had decided to obliterate this Treaty and so bring Germany out of her misery again. Versailles, however, had not only caused material injury but had above all created a disastrous confusion of ideas, which in the last analysis was to blame for the difficulties and misunderstandings of the most recent period. The Reich Foreign Minister pointed out at some length that, in taking action against the Versailles Treaty, the Führer had always tried first to achieve his end by negotiation. His proposals, however, as the Reich Foreign Minister demonstrated by a few examples, had always been ignored, so that the only course remaining was a solution by unilateral action.

<sup>1</sup> Gafencu visited Berlin Apr. 18-20.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 78.

The Reich Foreign Minister dwelt in detail on Britain's role. In all her attempts to remedy the wrongs caused by Versailles, Germany had again and again met with resistance from Britain. The Czecho-Slovak crisis would never have reached such a pitch if Britain had not given M. Beneš the impression—a wrong one, as it afterwards turned out—that he could definitely count on Britain's support and need not comply with the reasonable German wishes. Something of the same kind was happening now with Poland. It was completely incomprehensible why Poland did not accept the Führer's historic offer, but openly ranged herself with the encirclement Powers. Here again Britain was playing the same role and interfering in things which did not concern her. In accordance with the Declaration of 1934, Germany had wanted a direct settlement of the questions affecting the two countries, and for a long time this method had proved successful until now events had taken a fateful turn, the consequences of which could not be foreseen.

He (the Reich Foreign Minister) wished to say quite frankly that Rumania's conduct in accepting the British guarantee had been interpreted in Germany as being at least a kind of passive compliance with the British policy of encirclement. This attitude of Rumania's had left a disagreeable impression in Germany. If Rumania were to allow herself to be drawn into taking a more active part in this policy, Germany would have no understanding whatever for such a course.

In conclusion the Reich Foreign Minister spoke of economic relations with Rumania. Germany definitely wished to cooperate in this field, but the ratio of the leu to the mark must be radically altered since by the present rate of exchange Rumanian grain was three times as expensive for Germany as it was on the world market, so that if these conditions continued Germany would automatically be compelled to buy elsewhere.

Summing up, the Reich Foreign Minister remarked that there was no need for differences between Rumania and Germany. He declared that the period, wrongly named by the world that of German expansion, which was in fact nothing more than a period of safeguarding Germany's natural *Lebensraum*, had come to an end with the settlement of the Austrian, Bohemian and Moravian questions. The Reich Foreign Minister could state quite officially that Germany had no territorial interest in South East Europe and was pursuing absolutely no such aspirations there. Her interests were obviously purely economic and directed towards the exchange of her own goods for products from the South East European countries which she lacked.

Asked by the Reich Foreign Minister about Rumania's negotiations with Britain, Poland and Russia, Gafencu answered at first in general terms, saying that his own country, like all the other smaller countries in the South East, was interested in the maintenance of peace among

the great Powers. If peace prevailed in the West, it would be ensured for the East also. But conflict between the great Powers would hold the direst consequences for the small Powers. Over such a conflict one was often in a position where even the strongest will could avail statesmen nothing, as it was purely and simply a fight for power.

Gafencu then spoke of the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty, mentioning that in this connection Rumania had received at first warnings, and then offers, from certain other Powers. He could say quite frankly that the British guarantee had not been given against Rumania's will. At first, however, Britain had contemplated a formula which had previously been described at Geneva as a *pacte d'assistance*. Titulescu<sup>3</sup> had originally attempted to bring about something of the kind, and he (Gafencu) had opposed it in Parliament at the time. Titulescu had failed in this, not only because the King did not want these things but also because public opinion vehemently opposed collaboration with Soviet Russia. Now Britain had again proposed a *pacte d'assistance*. To this Rumania had replied that she wanted no *pacte d'assistance*, no pact with Russia, nor anything which would bind her in any way, as Rumania had neither the strength nor the wish herself to guarantee the British Empire. Rumania had declared that she would have nothing to do with anything involving reciprocity, or with anything in which Russia would be taking part. She was also not so much interested in the guaranteeing of her national independence, which she thought she could look after herself, but she attached importance to a guarantee of her frontiers, as she had neighbours who still openly agitated against her in the press and on the radio. Thus an assurance had come about which Gafencu described as a spontaneous unilateral guarantee. Rumania was also ready, however, to accept a guarantee from any other country, and the acceptance of the British guarantee therefore could not be regarded as a gesture directed against other countries.

He had already told the German Minister in Bucharest on a former occasion that long-term economic collaboration between Rumania and Germany was dependent on a political pacification. If such a pacification were to be permanent it must, he was convinced, develop naturally out of the prevailing conditions, and therefore he had not tried in any way to force political affairs at a time when the two countries were still "cross" with one another, but had awaited more favourable conditions and had begun with economic matters. He could well imagine, however, that when once the right moment had come, Rumania would exchange declarations with Germany in the same way that the latter had done with Poland and France. A country with such inten-

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<sup>3</sup> Formerly Rumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the League of Nations Assembly.

tions, however, could not be said to be taking a one-sided view in accepting a guarantee which was offered to her, and he must again emphasize that Rumania would also accept the same guarantee from any other country.

About the reports mentioned by the Reich Foreign Minister concerning negotiations with Russia, Gafencu declared most emphatically that Rumania had negotiated neither directly nor indirectly with Russia. He had at once declared the alleged Black Sea Pact<sup>4</sup> to be rubbish. He had caused it to be emphasized in London and Paris that Rumania wished to have nothing to do with the encirclement of Germany or with Russia. After the latest occurrences Rumania had not been in touch with Poland until the conversation which he had had yesterday with the Polish Foreign Minister in the train at Cracow.<sup>5</sup> This conversation was held on the initiative of Beck; an initiative that he (Gafencu) had first learned about during the journey itself.

Beck had told him that Poland was in no way participating in a policy of encirclement of Germany. Beck had declared that by the Agreement with Britain, Poland had only continued that part of her foreign policy which had previously found expression in the Polish-French Alliance, and to which Germany had raised no objections when making her Declaration with Poland. Moreover Beck had always insisted that Russia should be left out, and on this occasion had again taken steps to ensure that the matter be settled without Russia.

Gafencu again defined Rumania's general attitude, emphasizing in the name of the King and the whole Rumanian Government his country's desire for peace and its readiness to come to an understanding with Germany, and adding that he personally was not pursuing any ambiguous policy but was following his political course in all sincerity as a former officer. When asked by the Reich Foreign Minister about the subject of the conversation recently held with the Turkish Foreign Minister, he replied that it had to do neither with an interpretation of the Montreux Convention<sup>6</sup> regarding the Straits nor with a Soviet Russian-Turkish pact. Rumania was only interested in the passage of merchant shipping through the Turkish Straits, so that in any case there was no question of a discussion on the passage of warships.

On the question of the encirclement of Germany, Gafencu declared that it was not taking place so much in the military and political fields, but was of a psychological nature. Germany's weakness here lay in

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 221, and footnote 7 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> In a memorandum of Apr. 17 (not printed, 33/25810) Fabricius recorded that M. Beck went to Cracow to meet M. Gafencu (on Apr. 16, 1939), and travelled with him to Katowice where the Foreign Ministers parted and M. Gafencu continued his journey to Berlin while Beck returned to Warsaw.

<sup>6</sup> The International Convention regarding the Régime of the Straits between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, signed on July 20, 1936. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 140, pp. 288-300.

her great strength, military and otherwise, which caused much anxiety. The Germany of today—and here he was in complete agreement with the Reich Foreign Minister—had progressed “streets beyond” her position at the time of Versailles. She was a great Power of the first order in Europe, but as such it was also her duty to speak reassuring words to the weaker Powers. Here it must be observed that the psychological reaction in other countries to Germany’s increase in power did not come from above, from the Governments, but arose from the body of the people themselves. The people were afraid of Germany. Such a state of mind could be very well countered by public repetition of the remarks which the Reich Foreign Minister had just made concerning the end of German expansion in South East Europe.

The Reich Foreign Minister replied that of course Versailles had disappeared though, as he had said before, the confusion of ideas still remained to some extent. Moreover Germany had spoken very reassuring words. What would France have done if she had been in Germany’s place? He hardly thought that she would have acted as reasonably over Alsace-Lorraine. In the naval agreement Germany had without ado recognized Britain’s supremacy at sea. That also had been a very reassuring gesture. The fear and anxiety of which M. Gafencu had spoken were brought about in Britain and France through the fault of these countries themselves. These countries meddled in things which did not concern them. For instance, what would the honour of France have had to do with the preservation of the politically impossible State of Czecho-Slovakia, if the spiritual standards of nations had not been debased by Versailles? There was no need to fear Germany, for she cherished no aggressive intentions against anyone. She was conscious of her strength, however, and if attacked she would react energetically. She had built a defence line in the West which was probably superior to the Maginot Line in its capacity for resistance. If France really wanted to try to use force on Germany, French national strength would be shattered against this German defence line.

The confusion of ideas, created by Versailles and kept alive by the unteachable elements in the Western democracies, was an immense danger. The warmongers, especially in Britain, were exploiting this situation for their own ends. When one considered that the German-British Naval Agreement had been concluded “on the assumption that Germany and Britain would never again enter into armed conflict with each other”, as he (the Reich Foreign Minister) had stated in London at the time when the Agreement was signed, then the possibility of this Agreement being denounced would have to be reckoned with, if Britain continued and intensified her present line of action, as the above-mentioned condition of the Agreement would no longer exist.

He (the Reich Foreign Minister) had also told France plainly and

clearly, during his conversation with M. Bonnet in Paris at the signing of the German-French Declaration,<sup>7</sup> that Germany would in no way interfere in the French sphere of influence, but that she expected the same from France.

Turning to the subject of President Roosevelt's message,<sup>8</sup> the Reich Foreign Minister declared that psychologically it was about the worst step imaginable with regard to Germany. The man in the street says at once that it must be a repetition of Wilson's old trick with the Fourteen Points.

In reply to a question by the Reich Foreign Minister, Gafencu declared that Rumania knew nothing in advance concerning Roosevelt's message [and that Rumania did not feel herself threatened by Germany].<sup>9</sup>

In another connection he stated that a strengthening of cultural collaboration between Rumania and Germany was very desirable, but he did not wish to go into details at this stage of the discussions.

The Reich Foreign Minister then expressed his satisfaction regarding the exchange of correspondence with Csáky, whereupon Gafencu stated that he had used Csáky's speech in the Hungarian Parliament, in which was contained an assurance to Rumania which Csáky would never have wished to give directly, to settle the affair by an exchange of correspondence.<sup>10</sup>

The difficulties with the Hungarians arose partly from the treatment of the minorities. Hungary was now making fresh demands and he (Gafencu) would be grateful to the Reich Foreign Minister if he would use his influence with Hungary to bring about a friendly understanding with Rumania, and at the same time he thanked him for the moderating influence which he had exercised with this country on former occasions.

SCHMIDT  
R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>7</sup> On Dec. 6, 1938. See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 369 and 370.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 200.

<sup>9</sup> The words in square brackets are added in Ribbentrop's handwriting.

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 204.

## No. 228

57/93953

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 352

BERLIN, April 18, 1939.

According to instructions I rang up Minister von Kotze in Riga this afternoon to tell him that we were unable to understand the answer of the Latvian Foreign Minister, M. Munters,<sup>1</sup> to our question about the Roosevelt telegram. While practically all the other Governments

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 214.

whom we have asked have already answered, and naturally in the negative, M. Munters treated this ridiculous American propaganda as a question on which he wished to consult his Cabinet. If M. Munters did not answer "no" to our question right away, we should have to add Latvia to those countries which made themselves into willing accomplices of Mr. Roosevelt. I said that I assumed that a word on these lines by Herr von Kotze to M. Munters would be enough to obtain the obvious answer from him.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 229

2943/570012-15

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, April 18, 1939.

The Swedish Minister today communicated orally his Government's answer to the conversation on the question of the Aaland Islands which took place with State Secretary Freiherr von Weizsäcker on April 12.<sup>1</sup> He read out lengthy instructions, the purport of which was that the Swedish Government are unwilling to make the proposed statement, but instead declare themselves ready to confirm explicitly to the German Government their previous statements on the Swedish policy of neutrality; the instructions contain, in place of the desired statement, an *exposé* of Swedish foreign trade policy in the event of war between the Great Powers.

The Minister communicated these details:

It had come as a surprise to the Swedish Government that misgivings had arisen about Swedish participation in the defence of the Aaland Islands. The special interest of Sweden in the islands had already been recognized previously by Germany and other Powers. It derived its material justification from the fact that any occupation of the Aaland Islands by a belligerent Power might constitute a threat to the Swedish capital and to the sea-lanes leading to it. The purpose of the Swedo-Finnish project had been to safeguard, in the best possible way, the position of Sweden as a neutral and independent State. To grant Finland rights for an indefinite period would create a greater change in the system hitherto in force in the Baltic than the arrangements envisaged by the Swedo-Finnish project. Any plan which did not provide for Swedish participation would be unacceptable to Sweden.

A formal linking of the question of the Swedish policy of neutrality with that of the Aalands question would also be unacceptable to Sweden. There were, moreover, no material reasons for so doing. The basis of the Swedish policy of neutrality would not be changed by

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 187.



Sweden's participation in the defence of the islands; it would only be strengthened. If Germany intended to make a formal reservation concerning Sweden, this would lead to an *impasse*, since other countries would then also come forward with reservations.

It had also come as a surprise to the Swedish Government that doubts should be entertained in Germany as to whether, in the event of a conflict between the European Great Powers, Sweden would unswervingly pursue a policy of neutrality. The Swedish Government had repeatedly, on their own account, and on other occasions in conjunction with the other Northern States, made pronouncements upon this policy. They were ready to give express confirmation of these pronouncements both to the German Government and to any other Government.

In a conflict between the Great Powers, it was in Sweden's interest to maintain trade relations in every direction on the largest possible scale. The extent of these connections would depend, in the first instance, upon the Swedish national economy and could not be unaffected by the situation created by measures adopted by the belligerent Powers. (For example: if the Swedish coast is blockaded by a belligerent Power, the supply of butter to Sweden will be cut off. In consequence, Sweden will use more of her own butter for her own needs and will, therefore, have to reduce her exports.) The Swedish Government must, therefore, reserve the right to regulate their foreign trade in such a way as circumstances render necessary. Thus, in the event of war, Sweden will certainly have to change over to a system of prohibiting and licensing exports. As Sweden's neutrality in a conflict between the Great Powers will in all probability entail a limitation of import facilities, Sweden's own economic problems must be taken into consideration where exports are concerned. In particular, she must avail herself of the opportunities of procuring by means of exports the imported commodities which she will need.

Sweden's purely economic interests would, accordingly, be the deciding factor for her commercial policy during a war. These would, of course, include her interest in avoiding anything that might endanger the full maintenance of her neutrality. The system of restrictions contemplated in the sphere of foreign trade would not be unilaterally directed against any state that respected Sweden's neutrality and independence. The Swedish neutrality policy also implied that declarations would not be given in advance to one side which could not equally be addressed to any other in the same terms.

The Swedish Government hoped that after this explanation the German Government would agree to accept without modification the Swedo-Finnish proposals.

With the concurrence of the Swedish Minister, I summed up his statements as indicating that the Swedish Government were not prepared to make the declaration proposed by us. The Minister was,

however, of opinion that German misgivings had been removed by the explanations which he had given about Swedish foreign trade policy in the event of war. The reservations which Sweden had made in regard to the conduct of her foreign trade policy, had their origin in the very nature of the matter.

I put forward, in the course of conversation, the question whether it might not after all be possible to find a formula, corresponding to German and Swedish wishes, somewhat to the effect that in war normal Swedish exports to Germany would not be prejudiced by a measure directed unilaterally against one belligerent Power, and taken for any reason not inherent in the Swedish national economy, but without committing myself to the view that such a declaration would be acceptable to us. The Minister thought that the substance of such a formula was contained in the declarations given, but did not seem to think that the Swedish Government would give us any formal assurance whatsoever that went beyond them.

I reserved a final answer.

At the conclusion of the conversation I mentioned that the State Secretary, in the course of his conversation with the Minister on April 12, had expressed our wish to inform the Finnish Minister, but had asked for a Swedish statement on the subject first. We had now learned from Helsinki<sup>2</sup> that the Finnish Government had already been informed by the Swedish Government, and this had placed us in a somewhat awkward position. I did not, however, want to make it the subject of any special complaint. The Minister was acquainted with the fact and regretted that Helsinki had been informed by Stockholm without his concurrence. No details of any kind had however been communicated to the Finnish Government, least of all, that we had linked these matters with questions of foreign trade.

WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 212.

## No. 230

8913/E622185

### *The Minister in Latvia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 47 of April 19

RIGA, April 19, 1939—3:22 p.m.

Received April 19—6:30 p.m.

Pol. IX 774.

With reference to my telegram No. 46 of April 17.<sup>1</sup>

Munters handed me the following reply to question 1, this morning:  
“The Latvian Government cannot understand why such a question is

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 214.

put to them in the present connection, and they would only be prepared to reply to this question in an exchange of views with the Reich Government which was free of any side issues. The Latvian Government do not hesitate to add that in the present state of Latvian-German relations the question of a threat to Latvia's independence and integrity does not arise. On the other hand, the Latvian Government cannot help regarding the present international situation with anxiety and entertaining fears regarding the future course of international relations and the maintenance of peace.

"For their part, they will continue to adhere strictly to their policy of neutrality."

When, in accordance with the instructions by telephone from the State Secretary,<sup>2</sup> I expressed to him the surprise of the German Government concerning the delay and hesitations in replying to question 1, and laughingly referred to the possibility of Latvia being suspected of joining the ranks of the British encirclement satellites, Munters also laughed and replied that, contrary to his statement of the day before yesterday, the answer had not been discussed by the Cabinet. He had drawn it up yesterday at midday after receiving the exact text of the Roosevelt Declaration, but owing to the prolonged Cabinet meeting, which had been fully taken up with important matters of domestic politics, had not been able to hand it over or explain it to me. As could be seen from the above statement, Latvia did not in fact feel herself threatened by Germany.

KOTZE

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 228.

## No. 231

2767/535859

*The Minister in Greece to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

No. 34 of April 19

ATHENS, April 19, 1939—9:00 p.m.

Received April 19—11:35 p.m.

Pol. II 1261.

With reference to my telegram No. 31 of April 14.<sup>1</sup>

Today I had an opportunity to speak to State Secretary Mavroudis along the lines of the instructions in telegram No. 51.<sup>2</sup> I taxed him on the subject of the Halifax-Chamberlain statement<sup>3</sup> (cf. *Times* report of April 14) regarding the events leading up to the British guarantee,

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5453/E366639).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 186, sent as telegram No. 51 to Athens.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 189.

in view of his assurances reported in my despatch of April 12.<sup>4</sup> Mavroudis admitted that on Easter Sunday the Greek Minister had, on instructions from his Government, sought information on the state of affairs from the British Foreign Minister<sup>5</sup> in view of the rumours circulating in Athens regarding Italian designs on Corfu. Greece, however, had not asked for any assistance, nor had Britain promised any guarantee before April 13. Greece had had to express gratitude for the Anglo-French Guarantee Declaration when it had been made, in the same way as she had done to Italy,<sup>6</sup> but she was firmly resolved not to go beyond that limit. I referred to the *Times* article of April 12<sup>7</sup> regarding Greek harbours and rumours about Greek promises to Britain concerning the use of harbours. Mavroudis protested that harbours, like the mainland and islands, were a part of Greek territory, whose neutrality Greece would defend in case of war. In the long run, however, Greece would be powerless against the use of force. Incidentally, Britain had not recently addressed any enquiries to Greece regarding use of harbours. Thus the Western Powers' guarantee had been entirely unilateral.

ERBACH

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (2184/472090-92). Erbach had reported that Mavroudis had categorically denied the rumours current in Athens that Greece had appealed to Great Britain for help or that Great Britain had for her part made approaches to Greece offering help in the event of an Italian attack.

<sup>5</sup> On Apr. 9. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 111 and 112.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 228, footnote 5.

<sup>7</sup> An article by the naval correspondent of *The Times* entitled "Harbours of the Mediterranean", had surveyed the main strategical features of the Eastern Mediterranean in their bearing upon the freedom of sea communications in that area.

## No. 232

2048/570007

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation  
in Finland*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 50

BERLIN, April 19, 1939—9:15 p.m.  
zu Pol. VI 1027.<sup>1</sup>  
Pol. VI 1036.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 35<sup>1</sup> and 40.<sup>2</sup>

For information and guidance on language to be held:

It is a fact that we have made enquiries of the Swedish Government regarding their neutral attitude in the event of war between Germany and other Powers. The unsatisfactory Swedish reply<sup>3</sup> makes further

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 212.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed; see document No. 212, footnote 2.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 229.

discussion with the Swedish Minister necessary; however, we aim at concluding the conversation as soon as possible.

I informed the Finnish Minister today of the foregoing<sup>4</sup> and emphasized that the German Government had no objection to the fortification of the islands planned by Finland.<sup>5</sup>

WOERMANN

<sup>4</sup> Woermann recorded this interview in a memorandum of the same date (not printed, 2943/570016).

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 43 of Apr. 21 (not printed, 2943/570008) Blücher enquired whether he might interpret Woermann's statement to the Finnish Minister to mean that the German Government agreed to the fortification of the Åland Islands by Finland even without any alteration of the Convention and whether he could inform the Finnish Foreign Minister of this in confidence. Woermann replied, in telegram No. 54 of Apr. 22 (not printed, 2943/570010), that the statement applied only to fortification under the new arrangement envisaged. The question of fortifying the islands before such an arrangement came into force had not been discussed.

## No. 233

1625/388568-69

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 131 of April 19

LONDON, April 19, 1939—9:34 p.m.

Received April 20—12:05 a.m.

Pol. II 1260.

With reference to my telegram No. 128 of April 18.<sup>1</sup>

I have learned the following from a reliable source about the contents of the proposals submitted by Britain and France to Soviet Russia concerning the so-called pact of mutual assistance:<sup>2</sup>

The proposal consists of one document comprising only eight lines of typescript. The proposed agreement is said to include all the European States bordering on Russia, i.e., Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Rumania. In the event of aggression against one or more of the parties to the agreement, Soviet Russia would accept the obligation "to render to adjacent States subject to attack the assistance which these States themselves desired". The meaning of aggression would again be defined in this agreement, as it was in the Declaration of March 31<sup>3</sup> made by Britain to Poland, that is, action would have to have been taken which clearly threatened the independence of the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1625/388564-65). In this telegram Kordt reported that the Polish Counsellor of Embassy told him in an informal conversation that both Poland and Rumania had firmly refused to accept promises of help from the Soviet Union. This disposed of speculations about Poland placing air bases at the disposal of the Soviet Union for attacks on Germany. Kordt had the impression that the Counsellor of Embassy wished to convey that Britain had abandoned her efforts to make Poland and Rumania change their minds.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, chapter III.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 136.

State concerned and the State concerned would have to regard it as vital to resist this attack with its national forces. I further learn that the Soviet Government asked what Soviet Russia would receive in exchange in the event of such a pact of mutual assistance being concluded. Britain and France replied that the *quid pro quo* must be regarded as being the Anglo-French guarantee of the adjacent States, which automatically offered the Soviet Government full security against a European attack on Soviet Russia. It was thus not clear whether this guarantee referred only to Poland and Rumania or to the three Baltic States also. The latter supposition is supported by your telegram No. 122 of April 14.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover there appears to be considerable confusion in the Russian camp. Ambassador Suritz told the French Government that Soviet Russia was prepared to guarantee Rumania, including Bessarabia. When the French Ambassador in Moscow spoke to Vice-Commissar Potemkin about this statement, Potemkin replied that the Soviet Government had definitely not yet made a decision on the subject.

KORDT

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 196, sent as No. 122 to London.

## No. 234

F14/086-93

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND M. GAFENCU, THE RUMANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER, STATE SECRETARY MEISSNER AND THE RUMANIAN MINISTER, ON APRIL 19, 1939, FROM 12 NOON TO 1:10 P.M.<sup>1</sup>

M. Gafencu thanked the Führer for receiving him and said that for him yesterday had been an interesting and successful day; he had had a frank and detailed talk with the Reich Foreign Minister at which they had discussed the German-Rumanian Agreement and other political questions.<sup>2</sup> Relations between Germany and Rumania were on a sound and natural basis and could still be improved a great deal. There were great opportunities inherent in these relations. The vital necessities of both sides must be recognized and satisfied. The recognition and the exchange of trading possibilities were a European duty, which was in the interests of solidarity and peace. He himself had spoken clearly and frankly to this effect. Rumania was a small country and the major matters which concerned the Great Powers

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<sup>1</sup> For Gafencu's account of this interview given in his conversations in London, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. 7, No. 278.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 227.

were of no direct interest to her. But order and peace in the West meant order and peace everywhere.

Passing to Britain's declaration of guarantee,<sup>3</sup> he described it as a diplomatic move which he did not think could be characterized as a policy of encirclement. Rumania did not believe in such a thing, she would fight for her independence herself. The problems of Rumanian foreign policy were local questions and not matters of world politics. But in the form in which the guarantees had been offered by the Western Powers they could do no harm, neither could they be rejected.

At all events, Rumania would take no action which was directed against a Great Power. Moreover, it was particularly important that Russia should not gain any influence over European politics. A reciprocal treaty with Russia had come to naught because of the will of the Rumanian people. One could not engage in European politics with Russia. He had also told this to M. Beck.

The Führer said that German policy could be outlined from two aspects.

His life's aim in politics was to destroy Versailles. He had almost achieved his aim. The world had no right to complain about his methods. Our methods were better than those of others. His ambition was not to get a good mark from France and Britain for his behaviour but to restore German sovereignty. There was already a limit to this aim. He had effected these rectifications as peacefully as possible and without bloodshed, and he did not intend to stake much, where it was not worth while. For example, he had set limits in the West and the South. One could always only go to such lengths as could be justified in domestic policy and propaganda. The prerequisite for success was the absence of any ambiguity. Foreign and domestic policy must harmonize completely. He intended to keep to these limits throughout the West. Holland was neutral, and a neutral Holland was of greater value than a Holland which was on one's own side, for one needed the neutral countries as sources of supply. He had set himself the same limits in Italy, and in this connection he mentioned also Yugoslavia, Hungary and Slovakia.

The questions at issue between Germany and Poland had been so insignificant as to be ridiculous, but the Polish Government had now embarked on a course which was completely incomprehensible to him. The Polish Government had fallen a victim to their own domestic strife. As long as the Marshal [Pilsudski] was there, he had forced domestic policy and propaganda to keep to his course. Now the Government were the victims of their own improvidence at home and were forced to make concessions to the demented mob. If the Government were not in a position to apply the brake then they must not be surprised if later they could no longer manage affairs.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 189.

The Führer described in the greatest detail his offer to Poland, including his tripartite offer for Slovakia, and added that this was a proposal which only a madman could refuse. For he alone could make such a proposal, and he was the only one who could have carried it out. The Polish-British Agreement constituted a breach of the German-Polish Agreement. The offer which he had made to Poland would not be repeated, not even if the Poles made approaches to him on the subject. He had tried to show Poland that he understood her position and, when the Poles showed such eagerness for a common frontier with Hungary, he had told them that he had no interests down there.<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately the result of this accommodating attitude had been the opposite of what he desired; Poland had written off the [? Carpatho-] Ukraine without a word. He regretted that now, for a direct road and railway from Germany to Rumania could have been built, which could have been of great importance for trade.<sup>5</sup>

He had only one wish, to have a consolidated Europe. Nations did not thrive on war but on commerce. Germany was not the greatest exporting factor but the greatest consumer nation of Europe. Thus it was ridiculous to say that Germany wanted to make Rumania dependent on her. He would almost say that it was rather he who was dependent on Rumania, as he needed food and oil from there, whereas, if the worse came to the worst, Rumania could obtain elsewhere the machinery which she purchased from Germany. This trade, however, could only be carried on in times of peace.

For him there were two political aims:

- 1) to restore the complete sovereignty of Germany;
- 2) to regain the colonies.

Trade ties arose as a matter of course, but were dependent on peace. In Memel<sup>6</sup> we could have avenged ourselves for all that the Lithuanians had done to us during recent years. But what would he have gained from this? Instead he was allowing commerce to develop and thus the two nations would automatically come closer and closer together. Germany's strength lay in the fact that she was the greatest consumer nation in Europe. The countries who wanted to sell to us must naturally also buy from us. Just because it was his view that trade could only be carried on between authoritarian States, he had intervened in Spain to save her from Bolshevism. He had been asked, why do you not let Spain become Bolshevik? This Bolshevism would then probably spread to France and Holland and this would make Germany's position all the stronger. This, however, was nonsense, for the time when it was thought that by destroying another country one increased one's own strength was past. Strong, healthy and orderly neighbours were essential for Germany, because she had to trade with them.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 119.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 254.

<sup>6</sup> For German action in Memel, see *ibid.*, chapter III.



If Britain wanted war, she could have it, but it would be a great disappointment to him, who had been a great Anglophile from his earliest youth. It had always been his opinion that Germany and Britain must work together, but the policy being pursued there today was one of visionaries and not of statesmen. These gentlemen still did not realize that the Germany of the seventeenth century no longer existed. The Jewish gutter press [*Journaille*] and world incitement made statesmen incapable of pursuing a sane policy. Moreover, he thought the panic propaganda in the Anglo-Saxon countries was dangerous, as it always recoils on the propagandists themselves. They described the Germans as cannibals, as a tremendous danger, and thus made their own people hysterical and afraid. Propaganda of this kind never contributed to consolidating a nation. "I see to it that my people face the nerve shattered West calmly and collectedly."

Reverting again to German-Rumanian relations, the Führer said that there were no points of tension between these two countries. He might add to this that the fact that Slovakia existed at all was due to Slovakia's efforts from the start to be on good terms with Germany. The Germans in Yugoslavia and Rumania had never expressed the desire to come under Hungary. The Germans in Transylvania and the Banat had even implored him to do everything to prevent their re-incorporation in Hungary. As long as Rumania pursued a reasonable policy in this field, it was very easy for the German press to advocate good German-Rumanian relations.

Returning to the British "mania for guarantees," he said that there was no question of Germany being an enemy of Rumania. Rumania's only possible enemies were Hungary, Russia and Bulgaria, and he did not think that Britain would ever put a guarantee into effect if Rumania was attacked by one of these States. Britain was quite unable to do so nor would she do this.

He could understand Gafencu's statement that he could not reject the gesture, but this would be represented in Britain as if Rumania was thereby contributing to the anti-German front. We were not interested in an alteration of the frontiers in favour of Hungary, for example; the Hungarians were no kin of ours, and furthermore, in contrast to Britain, he championed the view that there were many things in the world which were absolutely no concern of Germany.

In conclusion the Führer said that good relations between Germany and Rumania were already assured as a result of mutual trade interests. Commercial matters would bring us closer and closer together. Hereupon the Führer spoke at some length about the quality of German workmanship and mentioned in particular the excellence of our means of transport and our aircraft.

With this the conversation ended.

## No. 235

2050/447390-82

*Unsigned Memorandum*

BERLIN, April 19, 1939.

CONFERENCE WITH THE SLOVAK MINISTERS IN THE FOREIGN  
MINISTRY ON APRIL 19, 1939

## Present:

## For Germany :

State Secretary von Weizsäcker  
State Secretary Keppler  
Under State Secretary Woermann  
Ministerialdirektor Gaus  
Senior Counsellor Altenburg  
Counsellor v.d. Heyden-Rynsch  
Major General von Toppelskirch  
Major Becker

## For Slovakia :

Minister President Tiso  
Foreign Minister Ďurčanský  
Minister Tuka  
Minister of War Čatloš  
Lieutenant-Colonel Schneider  
Minister Černák  
Counsellor of Legation Szathmáry

State Secretary von Weizsäcker welcomed the Slovaks and asked them to submit the questions which they wished to discuss on their side. Minister President Tiso mentioned the occupation by German troops of the aerodrome of Malacky and the demand by a German armoured formation for transit through Bratislava. Major General von Toppelskirch remarked that the two cases were not known to him in detail and he instructed Major Becker to find out about them.

Foreign Minister Ďurčanský suggested that all outstanding military questions should be cleared up by experts through negotiation.

Minister President Tiso went on to speak of the wishes of the High Command of the Wehrmacht which had been communicated to him orally by Consul General von Druffel.<sup>1</sup> He stated that extension of the treaty zone to Trenčín and Žilina was hardly bearable for the Slovak Government; in some villages, schools had been occupied by German troops and school attendance was therefore impossible. This was causing ill-feeling amongst the population. In many cases also Czech workers were being given preference over Slovak workers. The orders of the German military authorities were often contradictory and therefore caused confusion.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker pointed out the necessity of elucidating further the Treaty of Protection by laying down conditions for its application. The negotiations of the experts should clarify the legal relations. The German Government had no desire to cause

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 206, and footnote 3 thereto.

the Slovak Government more inconvenience than was necessary. The requirements of the troops must, however, be considered in their various aspects. It should not be difficult to reach agreement.

Minister President Tiso said that a general settlement was necessary.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker then passed to the question of uniform treatment of war material. The German Wehrmacht must demand decisive supervision and control of factories. Minister President Tiso mentioned the dismissal of Slovak workers in Dubnica on account of lack of raw materials. The foreign currency proceeds from deliveries were sent to Prague but the raw materials for continuing the work were not supplied.

Minister Tuka interjected that an early start of negotiations was necessary because of the many desiderata submitted.

Major General von Tippelskirch described as urgent the questions of determining the eastern limit of the protected zone and drawing up some kind of statute for this zone. The question of the building-up and arming of the Slovak army could be postponed. In this matter the Slovaks could first of all draw up a plan of their own, and then provisionally start building up the Slovak Armed Forces according to their own ideas. The desiderata which arose in connection with this could be communicated to the German Wehrmacht and negotiations entered into later.

Minister President Tiso touched upon the question of ownership in the former Czecho-Slovak arms factories.

State Secretary Keppler stated that Skoda had always been privately owned. In the course of the last six months the Brno arms factories had also passed from Czech State ownership into private ownership and thereby into German hands.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker asked if Herr von Druffel had also submitted desiderata from the Luftwaffe.

Minister President Tiso said that Slovakia wanted a number of aircraft to be returned to her. They wanted to build up the Slovak Armed Forces in some measure, so as to be in a position to safeguard the frontier with Hungary.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker remarked that certain demands would still be put forward by the German Luftwaffe and in conclusion declared that the questions described by Major General von Tippelskirch as urgent should be cleared up by discussions between experts as soon as possible, perhaps at the beginning of May.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> According to a memorandum by Gaus of May 24 (not printed, 8353/E590435-36) discussions on the Slovak draft statute for the zone of protection (not printed, 8353/E590437-49) were held May 8-18 and resulted in the production of a German counter-draft (not printed, 8353/E590450-61).

## No. 236

57/88968

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 354

BERLIN, April 19, 1939.

I told the Italian Ambassador this morning that, according to present arrangements, the Führer would, in his speech of the 28th of this month before the Reichstag, probably also read out the answer to be made to the President of the United States. I could at present say nothing more definite regarding this matter, or anything further in respect of the substance of the Führer's speech.

Ambassador Attolico told me again that, in the Italian view, Roosevelt's telegram was to be taken as being more ridiculous than tragic. For the rest, a clear and decidedly dry answer was to be given. A fairly close agreement between the German and Italian answers would, however, be necessary, although naturally the German and Italian arguments could not be identical. (He referred for instance to Wilson's Fourteen Points.)

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 237

2951/578554-55

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker<sup>1</sup>*

ROME, April 19, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: Your handwritten note<sup>2</sup> in which you enlarge on your cypher letter of April 15,<sup>3</sup> and which reached me yesterday, interested me very much indeed, as I have not yet had information of any kind here regarding the possibility which you mention as beginning to appear on the horizon. However, I do not think the thing is at all improbable and I would heartily welcome it. The State visit here, which ended the day before yesterday, has once again confirmed the usefulness of a direct exchange of views on the highest level.

The opinion you give in the last paragraph of your letter, about the attitude which Britain would adopt in given circumstances, tallies with the opinion expressed here by G[öring]<sup>4</sup> also in conversations I have had with him in the last few days.

With cordial greetings,

Heil Hitler!

Yours, etc.,

[unsigned]

<sup>1</sup> The letter printed here is a copy taken from Mackensen's papers.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 209.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 208.

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 205 and 211.

## No. 238

2422/511744-46

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 757

WASHINGTON, D.C., April 20, 1939.

Received May 3.

Pol. IX 969.

Subject: Reception of Roosevelt's so-called Peace Appeal<sup>1</sup> by the American Press and Public Opinion.

With reference to my telegram No. 121 of April 17.<sup>2</sup>

The so-called peace appeal, which President Roosevelt addressed to the Führer and Chancellor and to the Duce on the 15th of this month, has been received by the American press and public opinion with general approval. This of course applies particularly to Roosevelt's adherents who welcome this step as an opportune attempt by the President to assume the leadership of the anti-totalitarian front, and thereby to support the efforts of the Western Powers to encircle the "dictatorships", and to stem their expansion. These circles see in the appeal the expression of Roosevelt's consistent attitude which, from the well-known Chicago speech in October 1937,<sup>3</sup> in which he spoke of the quarantine of aggressor nations, to this latest step, presents a uniform policy. For what Roosevelt is doing by this new move is to compel the leading statesmen of Germany and Italy to show their hand and clearly state their aims.

But also the President's opponents, who have in recent weeks criticized with increasing violence his active foreign policy and, above all, his constant assaults on Germany and Italy, have, in the main, passed approving comment on this appeal, even if not exactly with enthusiasm. In the opposition circles of Congress there has been practically no word of criticism. The reason is first and foremost that the American, who as a rule still has something of Wilson's missionary ideas in him, is easily roused to enthusiasm over such dulcet tones of peace, and that even the most violent opposition can only escape from them with difficulty. Even though the President was passionately condemned for his continual war flourishes, it seemed contradictory, to say the least, to censure him for this step which, on superficial examination, appeared to spring from peaceful intentions. In spite of this, there has

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (B21/B005798-99). In this telegram Thomsen reported the first reactions to Roosevelt's appeal.

<sup>3</sup> Oct. 5, 1937. In this speech, the full text of which is printed in *Peace and War*, No. 93, Roosevelt said: "When an epidemic of physical disease starts to spread, the community approves and joins in the quarantine of the patients in order to protect the health of the community against the spread of the disease."

been no lack of voices gravely doubting the President's right to make such an appeal, since Roosevelt has abused the totalitarian Powers too long and too often to play the role of a peace-loving and neutral mediator successfully at this late date. Interesting in this connection is a leading article in the *New Yorker Staatszeitung*<sup>4</sup> of April 17, which proves quite clearly that Roosevelt has no such right. On the other hand, in consequence of the justifiedly sharp attacks in the Italian and German press, the Opposition probably did not themselves feel quite free to criticize the President, for fear of being exposed to the reproach of lacking patriotism.

The Opposition discerns that the President's step was undertaken under strong pressure of considerations of domestic policy. It is felt that Roosevelt wished to appear before the country with the halo of a world peace mission, firstly to strengthen his prestige—which owing to the failure of the New Deal, has declined considerably—but, above all, to take the wind out of the sails of those who had accused him, not without effect on public opinion, of having aggressive and war-mongering aims. By this step Roosevelt has, in fact, succeeded in temporarily silencing his opponents.

In both camps opinions vary as to what may have caused Roosevelt to take this surprising step. Some believe that the President spontaneously decided on this *démarche* because of the increasingly pessimistic reports of Bullitt in Paris and Kennedy in London. Others are of the opinion that the plan to take this step had already been conceived at Warm Springs, and that the message had been well considered and thought out long before. The President, in answering a question at his Press Conference, merely stated that the plan had not sprung from someone else's initiative, but was exclusively his own idea.

There is general agreement that no illusions should be entertained as to the answer. An affirmative answer is, from the way the question was phrased, hardly to be expected. Also, it would be difficult to imagine a guarantee which would embrace so vast an area as the territories of the 31 States specified. A section of the press represents the point of view that it is of no account whether the "dictatorships" answer in the affirmative or the negative. An affirmative answer would not substantially alter the state of affairs, as no confidence should be placed in a promise given by the totalitarian Powers. A negative answer would have the advantage of clarifying the position. Thus war guilt would be unequivocally established before the outbreak of a conflict. There was general surprise when it was learnt on the 17th that the Führer had summoned the Reichstag and would answer Roosevelt's *démarche* in detail. From this it is thought that one can conclude that the German answer will not be a blank refusal, but

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<sup>4</sup> German language newspaper published in New York.

rather a detailed presentation, furnished with counter demands, of the German point of view.

The order given to the fleet on the 15th to withdraw immediately from Atlantic waters, where it had been preparing for a review for the opening of the New York World Fair,<sup>5</sup> and to return to its bases in the Pacific also caused surprise, and has been appraised by the press as supplementing the peace appeal. This measure will, it is thought, besides securing American interests, above all relieve Britain and France, whose Fleets are tied up in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and will thus re-establish strategic equilibrium between the democracies and the totalitarian Powers.

A collection of leading articles and correspondents' reports is enclosed.<sup>6</sup>

THOMSEN

<sup>5</sup> Opened on Apr. 30, 1939.

<sup>6</sup> Not reproduced.

## No. 239

1625/368575

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

SECRET

No. 136 of April 21

LONDON, April 21, 1939.

Received April 22—9:15 a.m.

Pol. II 1283.

With reference to my telegram No. 131.<sup>1</sup>

The Soviet Russian counter proposals to the British proposals, which I reported in the above-mentioned telegram, contain the following points:<sup>2</sup>

- 1) Soviet Russia proposes that Britain, France and Soviet Russia should conclude a pact of mutual assistance.
- 2) This pact to be supplemented at once by definite military agreements.
- 3) The guarantees already given by France and Britain in favour of Poland and Rumania<sup>3</sup> are to be qualified by the express statement that they do not apply to the case of a Soviet Russian attack on Poland and Rumania, as there is no question of such an eventuality.
- 4) The Polish-Rumanian defensive alliance<sup>4</sup> which hitherto referred exclusively to a Soviet Russian attack on one of these two countries is to be divested of this character. It is thus to be made clear that this

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 233.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 201.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 136, 188 and 189.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 389 and footnote 4 thereto.

defensive alliance applies only to the case of an attack from the West. This defensive alliance is further to be supplemented by definite military agreements between Poland and Rumania.

As far as I have been able to ascertain up to the present, the Baltic States are not mentioned in the Soviet Russian counter proposals.

TH. KORDT

## No. 240

2422/511993

### *The Ambassador to the Holy See to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 71

ROME, April 21, 1939.

Received April 24.

Pol. IX 820.

Subject: Roosevelt's "Peace Appeal".<sup>1</sup>

Roosevelt's "Peace Appeal", I hear, is being severely criticized in circles close to the Vatican. Naturally every action in the service of peace is to be welcomed, it is said, and Pius XII has also during the short time since his enthronement<sup>2</sup> spoken repeatedly in the cause of peace, the last occasion being in his letter to State Secretary Cardinal Maglione (cf. *Osservatore Romano*, No. 95 of April 21, 1939).<sup>3</sup> In all his pronouncements, however, without expressly addressing any specific States, he has confined himself to invoking peace on the basis of justice, thereby making it so to speak a matter of conscience for all concerned. Roosevelt, on the other hand, has made the mistake of only addressing two specific Heads of Government, and in addition of making public this entirely one-sided appeal. In content, his appeal could on many points be called naïve, even childish, especially when he lists various countries towards whom Germany and Italy should undertake certain obligations. The proposal for a guarantee contained in the document is also a blunder, it is said, owing to its time limit, as it gives grounds for the suspicion that America intends to use this period of security for going on undisturbed in developing and strengthening her armaments for the event of war.

BERGEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 200.

<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 12, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> For an English text of this letter see *Principles for Peace, Selections from Papal Documents, Leo XIII to Pius XII* (Washington, 1943), p. 565. The letter, "Quandoquidem in Gubernanda", calls on the faithful to join in a crusade of prayer for peace during the month of May.



## No. 241

462/225653-54

*The Minister in Portugal to the Foreign Ministry*

1715

LISBON, April 21, 1939.

Pol. III 1000 g.

Subject: Portugal's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact.

With reference to your telegram No. 81 of April 18.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of a lengthy political conversation, which I had today with Ambassador Franco, the brother of the Generalissimo, I took the opportunity of broaching unobtrusively the question of Portugal's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact.

Señor Franco expressed his opinion very frankly, and the gist of it was that he regarded Portugal's accession as completely out of the question for the time being. The Ambassador said that immediately after the signature of the Anti-Comintern Pact by Spain<sup>2</sup> he had reported on this to Minister President Salazar and, in particular, explained what significance should be attached to the fact that the conclusion of the Pact had not come in the midst of the war but at a time when Spain had already achieved victory; for whereas previously world opinion might perhaps have been able to speak of pressure by Germany and Italy, any idea of force had now disappeared, and the signature had come to represent a political confession of faith and a clear statement of future policy. Salazar had listened to his explanations with understanding, but for his part had pointed out that the world might after all easily become suspicious and imagine there were things behind such a pact which looked like secret military alliances or similar mutual assurances. In any case he, Franco, had the impression that, at least with the present line-up of Powers and primarily out of consideration for Portugal's ties with Britain, the Minister President would never be induced to make such an avowal of policy as represented by the Anti-Comintern Pact.

VON HUENE

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 224.<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 27, 1939. See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 767 and 768.

## No. 242

2943/570017

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, April 21, 1939.

Today, in accordance with instructions,<sup>1</sup> I replied to the statements concerning the Aaland Islands question made by the Swedish Minister on April 18.<sup>2</sup> I explained that we were disappointed that the Swedish Government had not accepted our proposal. We had, however, been at pains to take account of the Swedish point of view—whereby a declaration in hard and fast terms about Swedish foreign trade policy in the event of war could not be given—by means of a new formula, which would run somewhat as follows:

"The Swedish Legation confirm on behalf of their Government that Sweden, who has repeatedly expressed her determination to preserve neutrality in the event of war, will also conduct her foreign trade policy during the period of hostilities in a manner appropriate to that end."

The Minister said that this formula seemed to him personally acceptable. He would submit it to his Government today and hoped for a very early reply.<sup>3</sup>

I observed thereto that, in the subordinate clause contained in this formula, we had made due mention of Sweden's offer to ourselves as well as to other Powers to give explicit confirmation of previous declarations on Sweden's policy of neutrality.

M. Richert then enquired about the form in which the declaration should be given. I told him that we had no special desires on this point, but that we attached importance to a written declaration. M. Richert thought that he could choose the form of the memorandum to be handed to us. I raised no objection to this.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> No record of these instructions has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 229.

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum of Apr. 22 (not printed, 2943/570018) Woermann recorded that the Swedish Minister had informed him by telephone that his Government had accepted the proposed formula with an alteration to the introduction. The revised text as given in a Swedish memorandum of Apr. 21 (2943/570020) is as follows: "In the course of a conversation in the Foreign Ministry, the Swedish Minister, on behalf of his Government, confirmed that Sweden who has repeatedly expressed her determination to preserve neutrality in the event of war will also conduct her commercial relations during the period of hostilities in a manner appropriate to that end."

## No. 243

6640/E504534-35

*Secret Protocol between Germany and Bulgaria*

The following agreement is made between the German Government and the Royal Bulgarian Government:

The German Government are agreed that the competent Bulgarian authorities may place orders with German firms for the delivery of war material with the exception of aircraft to the value of 45 million RM<sup>1</sup> on the same conditions as agreed upon in the Secret Protocol of March 12, 1938.<sup>2</sup>

Point 6 only of the above mentioned Secret Protocol of March 12, 1938, is replaced by the following agreement:

The Bulgarian Government agree that a certain proportion of the deliveries of war material shall be paid for by additional deliveries of raw materials. The deliveries of the products of the Pirin Lead and Zinc Mining Company referred to in the above mentioned point 6 of the Protocol of March 12, 1938, are primarily intended for this purpose, insofar as they exceed the annual amount of 1½ million RM in the next 5 years. As it must be expected that these deliveries will not suffice to ensure the repayment of the credit of 45 million RM granted in the Protocol of today's date to the same extent as is provided for in the Protocol of March 12, 1938, for the first credit of 30 million RM, the Bulgarian Government declare themselves ready, with the assistance of German experts, to prospect in Bulgaria for further mineral deposits suitable for exploitation. German industry is to be called in first of all in the exploitation of such mineral deposits. The products of such exploitation of mineral deposits are to be delivered primarily to Germany, and at least in sufficient quantity to repay in raw material the credit of 45 million RM granted in the Protocol of today's date in the same proportion as laid down in the Protocol of March 12, 1938, for the first credit of 30 million RM.

This Protocol comes into force on the day of signature. It will be treated as secret by both Governments.

Signed in duplicate in Berlin on April 21, 1939.

CARL CLODIUS

P. DRAGANOV  
R. RUSSEV, G. M.

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 218, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 181.

## No. 244

7801/E566155-56

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 131 of April 22

WASHINGTON, April 22, 1939—4:05 p.m.

Received April 23—12:30 a.m.

Pol. IX 807.

With reference to my telegram No. 121 of April 17, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all the expressions of agreement still unanimously accorded by press and public opinion here to Roosevelt's appeal, which can be explained by the Americans' predilection for such missionary ideas, a certain scepticism is nevertheless evident. Doubts are expressed whether such a step could in any case lead to a positive result, and whether in this form and under these conditions it would not merely irritate unnecessarily the person questioned and provoke answers which might prove extremely embarrassing to the questioner himself. Would not Hitler reject the appeal and the ideas for a conference contained in it, and point out that it lacked any positive proposals for removing the injustice of Versailles and actually only served to safeguard the gains which Germany's opponents had made, contrary to Wilson's theories, in 1919? Would not Hitler answer the proposal with a counter question as to what Germany could expect from a conference convened under the Versailles slogan of "accuser and accused"? Had not Roosevelt already ranged himself among the accusers? In view of all the abuse of the last few weeks would not Hitler reject the President's autocratic self-appointment to the role of pacific mediator?

Such reflections, however, are only isolated gleams of light. Meanwhile the agitation against us continues with unabated violence. The press gives great attention to the British attempt at encirclement and tries by means of sensational reports to gloss over its actual failure. Alleged Soviet Russian proposals for creating a Russian-French-British alliance are given great attention, and Russia is adjudged to be the decisive factor in the maintenance of the *status quo* in Europe. Japan's role, hitherto completely ignored, is gradually beginning to attract the attention of public opinion here.

THOMSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 238, footnote 2.

## No. 245

5570/E398853

*The Legation in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 120 of April 22

BELGRADE, April 22, 1939—8:00 p.m.

Received April 23—12:30 a.m.

W 586 g.

On the occasion of today's presentation by the Military Attaché of the Grand Cross of the German Eagle to the Minister of War, General Nedić raised the subject of the armament credit. He began by saying that he had received from the Field Marshal a firm promise of a credit amounting to 200 million and he then based the volume of possible orders on this sum. Out of it he intends to order for the Air Force 50 Czech Klemm Martins, 50 Dorniers 215, 50 Messerschmidts 109 and later a further 50 Messerschmidts 109.<sup>1</sup> The remainder of the sum is to be for the Army, especially armoured cars and armoured motorcycles for the motorization of the cavalry.

The Minister of War again emphasized urgency, as Yugoslavia had now to make up leeway *vis-à-vis* other Balkan States. In his words of thanks for the decoration, he also stressed Yugoslavia's interest in closer orientation towards Germany.

[No signature]

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 176.

## No. 246

1625/388570-71

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, April 22, 1939—8:55 p.m.

zu Pol. II 1260.<sup>2</sup>

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor Rintelen.

The London Embassy has heard from a reliable source that Britain has proposed to Soviet Russia that the latter offer Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Poland and Rumania a treaty by which Soviet Russia would undertake, in the event of aggression against one or more of the contracting parties, "to render to adjacent States subject to attack the assistance which these States themselves desired". The concept of

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions at (1) Moscow, (2) Paris, (3) Warsaw, (4) Bucharest, (5) Helsinki, (6) Riga and (7) Tallinn.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 233.

aggression is said to be again formulated in the same way as in the Declaration of Assistance made by Britain to Poland on March 31.<sup>3</sup>

It seems that negotiations on this British proposal are still in progress between London and Moscow, in which, according to the London source mentioned above, Moscow has in particular asked what would be the *quid pro quo* for Soviet Russia in the event of such a Pact of Assistance being concluded.

*To 3-7 only:*<sup>1</sup>

It is of course possible that the Soviet Russian Government may approach the Government to which you are accredited with a proposal on the lines of the British suggestion. Please report by telegram as soon as there are signs of this.

*To 3 and 4 only:*<sup>1</sup>

Please refrain from taking any action in this matter.

*To 5-7 only:*<sup>1</sup>

Please bring the matter up in the course of conversation and if necessary state that we could only regard acquiescence in such a Soviet Russian request as participation in or association with the other previous suggestions from London concerning combinations of Powers (cf. circular telegram of April 12).<sup>4</sup> Moreover we look upon the outcome of this fresh British initiative [which we regard as a sign of British weakness,]<sup>5</sup> with the same composure as the previous phases in Britain's [propaganda] campaign of encirclement.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 136.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 186.

<sup>5</sup> The words in square brackets are inserted in the draft in Ribbentrop's handwriting.

## No. 247

1818/415356

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland*

Telegram

No. 106

BERLIN, April 22, 1939—9:10 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. V 3579.

For information.

In any conversations on the general political situation and on German-Polish relations please maintain complete reserve until further notice. In other matters also the Embassy is for the present to maintain outwardly the greatest reserve. Ambassador von Moltke is remaining in Germany a few days longer, and will be present at the Führer's speech in Berlin on the 28th.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 355.

## No. 248

1546/876973-74

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 130 of April 22

BUDAPEST, April 22, 1939—6:10 p.m.

Received April 22—11:15 p.m.

Pol. IV 2697.

The Foreign Minister told me about his conversations with Mussolini and Ciano.<sup>1</sup>

To the Italian question whether Hungary sincerely wanted a *rapprochement* with Yugoslavia the Hungarian Ministers answered in the affirmative. Out of consideration for the strong opposition to a *rapprochement* with the Axis Powers and with Hungary which existed in the Army, among the clergy and the intelligentsia in Yugoslavia, Hungary had agreed not to make any positive offer to Yugoslavia for the moment, especially as the Yugoslav Government had so far insisted that Hungary should act towards Rumania at least in the same way as towards Yugoslavia. Csáky emphasized that the Hungarian Government were prepared in principle to conclude a non-aggression pact and a treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia. However, of the latter at any rate there could be no question as regards Rumania. Ciano intended to tell the Yugoslav Foreign Minister in Venice<sup>2</sup> that Hungary was fully prepared for further *rapprochement* with Yugoslavia and that this would be welcomed in Rome. He intended to recommend to the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, who in Mussolini's opinion had no influence in his country, accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact, and only later withdrawal from the League of Nations. In the event of Ciano gaining the impression that friendly cooperation with Yugoslavia was impossible Italy was considering making difficulties for Yugoslavia from Albania. They were also of the opinion that any solution of the Croat question could at most be achieved on paper. Italy greatly distrusted the pro-British Prince Regent. Mussolini had shown himself to be disinterested in Hungarian-Rumanian relations and had again promised not to conclude an Italian agreement with Rumania without previously informing Budapest and obtaining assent.

At Mussolini's suggestion, the Hungarian Minister of Commerce would go to Rome on April 30 for negotiations about the 55,000 head

<sup>1</sup> Teleki and Csáky paid an official visit to Rome, Apr. 18-20. See the *Ciano Diaries*, entries of Apr. 18, 19 and 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ciano held talks with Cincar-Marković in Venice, Apr. 22-23. See *ibid.*, entries of Apr. 22 and 23.

of Hungarian cattle which Italy had promised to take this year but had so far not taken.

Csáky, who was very agreeably impressed with his extremely cordial reception by the Italian Government and people, left Rome with the impression that the Italian Government were more firmly convinced than ever of the necessity for unconditional and far-reaching cooperation with Germany.

ERDMANNSDORFF

## No. 249

43/29349-51

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, April 22, 1939.

For submission to the Foreign Minister.

On Friday, April 21, 1939, M. Mussert, the leader of the National Socialist Movement in the Netherlands, called on me in the Hotel Kaiserhof.

M. Mussert had come to Berlin for two days to be present at the big parade,<sup>1</sup> which gave him an excellent impression of Germany's military strength.

M. Mussert asked me to communicate his basic views on European politics to the Reich Foreign Minister, whom he did not want to disturb in his important work.

M. Mussert spoke first of the movement, of which he was leader, and which showed the same trends of development as the NSDAP in its period of struggle. His movement had proved itself and had held together in spite of the difficult election fight which it had to wage against the Jews, who had massed in the Netherlands by emigration, and against the Government and the parties. It now had a core of 40,000 loyal members, with a further 120,000 adherents in the Netherlands. Public opinion in the Netherlands was inflamed against Germany by the propaganda of the Jews and Freemasons, but the mood would change when he, Mussert, came to power.

M. Mussert and his adherents say that they are convinced that a military conflict between Germany and Britain is inevitable. The National Socialist Movement in the Netherlands, by its political ideology, is on the side of the Axis Powers. As regards the Netherlands, Germany has the following alternatives in the coming world war:

1. Germany could make the Netherlands small and unimportant.
2. Germany could make the Netherlands as strong as possible, in order to maintain and exploit her overseas possessions.

<sup>1</sup> On Apr. 20, Hitler's birthday.



There were 8½ million Dutch subjects in the Netherlands to which must be added a further 5 million Flemings of the present-day kingdom of Belgium. The overseas possessions of the Netherlands were from four to five times as large as Germany, with some 70 million inhabitants. When the National Socialist Movement assumed power, this Netherlands Empire wished to be Germany's friend. The Netherlands still had an account to settle with Britain over the Cape Colony, stolen by Britain in 1815, and the former Boer republics. If these differences were settled there would be a new Axis alongside the Berlin-Rome Axis running from the Netherlands through Flanders and the Congo territory to South Africa.

Britain would not willingly give up the Mediterranean; therefore, if Mussolini was to realize his programme in the *Mare Nostrum*, there must be war. A National Socialist Netherlands would fight on the side of the Axis Powers for a free Fatherland, friendly to Germany.

If, on the other hand, the Führer, on whose shoulders lay all the power and the responsibility for the whole of Europe, wished to make the Netherlands into a vassal State, the work of the National Socialist movement in the Netherlands ceased to have any point or purpose. He, Mussert, would in that case immediately terminate the work of his movement.

M. Mussert asked me to communicate these statements to the Reich Foreign Minister.

RUDOLF LIKUS

## No. 250

B21/B005831-32

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IX*

BERLIN, April 22, 1939.  
zu Pol. IX 790.<sup>1</sup>

The various countries have reacted as follows to the two questions in our telegram of April 17, 1939:<sup>2</sup>

I. Yugoslavia, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Luxembourg, Finland, Estonia, Norway, the Netherlands, Iran, Turkey, Portugal, Bulgaria, Spain, Greece and Lithuania have answered both questions in the negative.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 213.

<sup>3</sup> The replies are contained in the following telegrams: No. 110 of Apr. 17 from Belgrade, No. 42 of Apr. 17 from Brussels, No. 31 of Apr. 17 from Copenhagen, No. 29 of Apr. 17 from Stockholm, No. 124 of Apr. 17 from Budapest, No. 12 of Apr. 17 from Luxembourg, No. 38 of Apr. 18 from Helsinki, No. 37 of Apr. 18 from Tallinn, No. 26 of Apr. 18 from Oslo, No. 27 of Apr. 18 from The Hague, No. 58 of Apr. 18 from Teheran, No. 121 of Apr. 18 from Ankara, No. 74 of Apr. 18 from Lisbon, No. 44 of Apr. 18 from Sofia, No. 420 of Apr. 18 from San Sebastian, No. 35 of Apr. 19 from Athens and No. 37 of Apr. 18 from Kovno (not printed, 8913/E622165-69, 71-76, 78, 81-84, 80).

II. 1) *Switzerland*.<sup>4</sup>

On question 1: The Federal Council rely on respect of a neutrality defended by Swiss armed forces, a neutrality which is formally recognized by Germany and the other neighbour States.

On question 2: The answer is no.

Both questions refer also to  
*Liechtenstein*.

2) *Rumania*.<sup>5</sup>

On question 1: Evasive answer. Reich Government were themselves in a position to know whether a threat might arise.

On question 2: The answer is no.

3) *Latvia*.<sup>6</sup>

On question 1: Evasive answer. Present state of Latvian-German relations gave no cause for fear of a threat to the independence and integrity of Latvia. However, anxiety regarding the international situation today, and fear in respect of further developments in interstate relations and the maintenance of peace, is expressed. Latvia will, for her part, strictly adhere to her policy of neutrality.

On question 2: The answer is no.

4) *Egypt*.<sup>7</sup>

With much circumlocution answered no to both questions.

5) *Irak*.<sup>8</sup>

On question 1: Answered in general terms regarding security and the danger of small States being annexed by large States, without committing herself to a clear yes or no.

On question 2: The answer is no.

III. Answer of Saudi Arabia still outstanding.<sup>9</sup>

Herewith submitted, in accordance with instructions, to the State Secretary.

V. SCHUBERT

<sup>4</sup> Telegrams No. 46 of Apr. 18 and No. 49 of Apr. 21 from Berne (not printed, 8913/E622177 and E622187).

<sup>5</sup> Telegram No. 195 of Apr. 18 from Bucharest (not printed, 8913/E622179).

<sup>6</sup> See documents Nos. 214, 228 and 230.

<sup>7</sup> Telegram No. 50 of Apr. 21 from Cairo (not printed, 8913/E622189).

<sup>8</sup> Telegram No. 52 of Apr. 21 from Bagdad (not printed, 8913/E622190).

<sup>9</sup> The reply was received on Apr. 25 in telegram No. 55 of Apr. 24 (not printed, 8913/E622190/1) which in addition to general phrases contained a reference to the fact that there were no diplomatic relations existing between Saudi Arabia and the United States.

## No. 251

33/25691

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Minister Heeren*

BERLIN, April 22, 1939.

DEAR HEEREN: The Reich Foreign Minister has instructed me to inform you that he is shocked and annoyed at the way in which the public announcement of Cincar-Marković's forthcoming visit to Berlin was made.<sup>1</sup> It is in fact also incorrect that the initiative for the visit came from Germany. On the contrary, it is to be seen from your telegrams that the suggestion was a Yugoslav one,<sup>2</sup> which the Reich Foreign Minister merely adopted when he himself invited the Yugoslav Foreign Minister. It had, however, been Herr von Ribbentrop's assumption and wish that the Yugoslavs would consult us on the nature of any public announcement of the visit and that you would forestall any such one-sided and misleading representation of the matter.

I discharge the instructions given me by adding that, in order to prevent the Italians from becoming understandably offended, we have today sent word to Rome through the Italian Ambassador here that the initiative for the visit actually came from Belgrade.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Cincar-Marković visited Berlin Apr. 25-27. For his conversation with Ribbentrop see document No. 262 and for that with Hitler see document No. 271.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 191.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 193 of Apr. 22 (not printed, 511/235513) Weizsäcker informed the Embassy in Rome to this effect.

## No. 252

472/228543-50

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

ROME, April 22, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: In accordance with your instructions by telegram<sup>1</sup> I enclose the desired report on the Göring visit. I hope it will assist in removing the disagreements which obviously exist between the two eminent gentlemen. My role between these two millstones is not exactly gratifying to me. However, the important thing after all is that the visit—and this is my considered opinion—came at a very happy moment, and was therefore a great success.

I should like also to tell you in strict confidence that, as was only natural, our great friend François-Poncet was also among the diplomats

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (100/64454). This telegram requested a report on Göring's visit to Italy.

mentioned at the end of my report. The Field Marshal discussed with me with very great thoroughness the question of a meeting with him, and we agreed that an obvious condition for a meeting was that Count Ciano should be previously informed by the Field Marshal, and also that care would have to be taken that news of the meeting should in no way become public. It took place at the Embassy on the day of [Göring's] departure, immediately before the farewell lunch which I also gave here. François-Poncet was himself so convinced of the necessity for absolute secrecy that he even took the precaution of coming here in a taxi instead of in his car. As Mme. Poncet, contrary to the original intention, could not be present to meet Field Marshal and Frau Göring, as she had to leave suddenly for Paris, politics could naturally not be entirely kept out of the conversation. Immediately afterwards, however, before our lunch, the Field Marshal repeated to Count Magistrati, who was one of the luncheon guests, exactly what political matters he had touched on with François-Poncet.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

MACKENSEN

[Enclosure]

ROME, April 22, 1939.

Subject: Visit of Field Marshal Göring to Italy.

With reference to your telegram No. 189 of [April] 21.<sup>1</sup>

The written report by the Consulate at San Remo of February 28,<sup>2</sup> arriving here on March 3 last, regarding information received there as to an impending visit by Field Marshal Göring to San Remo, caused me to send telegram No. 86 of March 3,<sup>3</sup> in which I requested instructions concerning this journey—also because of any possible personal announcement. In a telephone conversation<sup>4</sup> on the same day with the Chief of Protocol, Freiherr von Dörnberg, on another matter, I asked him, with reference to the telegram, for the relevant information. He replied that I would shortly receive a communication on this by letter and added that the Field Marshal was travelling purely as a private person and that, therefore, appropriate reserve was to be maintained by official German quarters in Italy. I thereupon informed the Consulate at San Remo as well as the competent Consulate General at Genoa accordingly. In view of the official reception by the Italian authorities at the railway stations concerned, the two Reich representatives at the above places travelled there as well and, according to their reports to me, also kept in touch with the Field Marshal's

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8420/E592839).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8420/E592841); see also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 456.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (8420/E592840).

entourage during the whole of his stay and issued any information desired from there.

Freiherr von Dörnberg's letter of March 7,<sup>5</sup> which I received on the 10th, then confirmed to me that the Field Marshal's stay in Italy was to be primarily for recuperation and stated further that during his stay the Field Marshal would also be spending a few days in Rome. "Although his visit was an unofficial one, the Italians would, as Count Magistrati had told him only recently, probably do him honour during his sojourn in Rome." The Embassy would also be affected by this. Herr von Dörnberg assumed that the responsible officer in charge of the journey, Lieutenant Colonel Conrath, would get in touch with the Embassy at the appropriate time. Herr von Dörnberg added strictly for my personal information that we were to wait a little while for the announcement of any wishes the party might have.

The subsequent sudden departure of the Field Marshal for Germany, caused by the political events, came to my notice only after he had left.

In a further private letter of March 31<sup>6</sup> from Minister Freiherr von Dörnberg to Counsellor of Embassy Baron von Plessen, the Embassy received information on April 4 that, according to a communication from Count Magistrati to Freiherr von Dörnberg, the Field Marshal would go from San Remo direct to Libya and come to Rome from there for a two-day official visit—probably from April 14 to 16. Freiherr von Dörnberg stated further in his letter that he assumed these details were already known to us but, if not, he wished to inform us of them. Already on the morning after receipt of the letter the Chief of Protocol, Count Bonarelli, called on me on behalf of Count Ciano in order, as he said, to obtain on behalf of his Minister my views on the best way of arranging the programme. The Field Marshal, with whom the Italian authorities kept in touch through Lieutenant Colonel Teucci, attached to him as an Honorary Adjutant, had said that he had no particular wishes and had merely asked not to make the programme too heavy. Count Bonarelli then described the programme to me as envisaged by the Italians which was substantially the same as that carried out later. He suggested to me that if the luncheon to be given by the King did not materialize or perhaps the programme arranged for the following day could not be carried out as intended, I for my part should give a luncheon for the Field Marshal at the Embassy, to which I readily agreed. Count Bonarelli then discussed on several further occasions the details of the programme arrangements by telephone or orally with the Counsellor of Embassy and, in fact, kept in touch with us during the whole time the programme was being arranged. On the other hand, I, as well as the Counsellor of Embassy, during the last few

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (100/64435-38).

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (8420/E592850).

days before the Field Marshal's arrival in Rome, cleared up any questions raised by the Protocol here with his Adjutancy—at the time in Tripoli—by telephone and telegram. The Field Marshal also assisted personally in the arranging of the programme at that time, whenever questions from the Italian side were submitted to him through us for a decision.

Since, as a result of developments in the Albanian question, Count Ciano was unable to give the intended dinner for the Field Marshal on the evening of the second day of his visit, I took over this function at his [Count Ciano's] request and, instead, left it to him to give the luncheon which the Embassy had intended to give. On communicating this to the Field Marshal, however, he expressed the wish that the evening function at the Embassy be cancelled, apparently with the desire to conclude the official part of his visit with the luncheon at Count Ciano's house and the subsequent tour of the Autarky Exhibition [*Mostra di Autarchia*] during which he was personally conducted by Party Secretary His Excellency Starace. He even wished to include the evening of the 16th in the short unofficial part of his visit.

*De facto*, the Embassy was thus brought into play as from April 5 even without the Reich Foreign Minister's instructions of the 11th instant<sup>7</sup> not then received, at a time when Count Ciano's decision on the details of the programme was awaited by the Protocol here. Contact was established with the Field Marshal's Adjutancy, whereby continuous reports by telegram and telephone were rendered to the Foreign Ministry, starting with the initial provisional arrangements for the programme on the 13th instant.

The Reich Foreign Minister's communication in a telegram<sup>8</sup> destined for the Field Marshal which was received here on the 11th instant addressed to me personally in cipher, could not be forwarded by telegram but had to be transmitted by airmail, since the Adjutancy in Tripoli had no cipher. It was forwarded to the Field Marshal by the most immediate airmail on the 12th and must, therefore, have reached him late on the afternoon of the 12th instant. As the Embassy's assistance in arranging the programme had at this stage already been rendered in full measure, of which the Field Marshal most likely heard through the numerous enquiries by telephone that had to be made because of questions raised by the Protocol here, the Field Marshal did not send me any further instructions; he informed me, however, on arrival here that the character of the visit as an official visit was not attributable to his own but to Italian initiative. He himself had merely wished to meet the Duce for a conversation.

<sup>7</sup> The reference appears to be to the instructions mentioned in the final sentence of document No. 178 and which have not been found.

<sup>8</sup> Document No. 178.

I presented myself to the Field Marshal at the station on his arrival in Rome and, as instructed by telegram No. 183 of the 13th instant,<sup>9</sup> placed myself completely at his disposal. Accordingly, I accompanied the Field Marshal, who arrived in Rome at 8 p.m. on that same evening, to his quarters and was able in the course of one and a half hours before dinner to receive from him instructions on a few incidental questions which had still to be clarified in respect of the Protocol. I subsequently accompanied the Field Marshal on the 15th and 16th to all functions; in accordance with the Protocol observed during the Reich Foreign Minister's last visit to Rome, however, I arranged for Minister Schmidt to attend the two conversations with the Duce as interpreter but was informed by the Field Marshal of the substance of these conversations. I did not make any report on them, in view of the fact that Minister Schmidt intended as soon as possible on his return to Berlin to submit the relevant memoranda to the Foreign Minister.<sup>10</sup>

No difficulties have arisen anywhere in connection with the carrying out of the programme.

During the subsequent unofficial visit, too, I accompanied the Field Marshal whenever it was not a purely personal mission and entertained him and Frau Göring as my guests immediately before their departure at a luncheon in the Embassy for sixteen persons, which was attended, on the Italian side, only by those accompanying the Field Marshal, Count Magistrati and Lieutenant Colonel Teucci with his wife.

Several of the diplomats accredited here who—partly because of personal relations—wished to pay their respects to the Field Marshal, have all had these wishes conveyed to him through me.

<sup>9</sup> Not printed (3000/587670). In this telegram Weizsäcker asked Mackensen on Ribbentrop's instructions to place himself entirely at Göring's disposal and to assume responsibility for the arrangements for his visit.

<sup>10</sup> See documents Nos. 205 and 211.

## No. 253

406/214353-54

### *The Minister in Estonia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

VERY URGENT

No. 41 of April 24

TALLINN, April 24, 1939—2:36 p.m.

Received April 24—5:00 p.m.

[Pol. VI 1086].<sup>1</sup>

With reference to my telegram No. 40 of April 21.<sup>2</sup>

Vice Minister Õpik returned to the suggestion of the Foreign Minister to counteract, by means of German-Estonian political action, Soviet

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy of this telegram (1751/403924-25).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (406/214351-52). In this telegram Frohwein reported on a conversation with Foreign Minister Selter on the matters referred to in the document here printed.

Russian efforts to establish a kind of protectorate over Estonia on the pretext of German intentions to attack the Baltic region. He deplored that, in spite of the Government's efforts, Soviet Russia had obtained some measure of success in certain Estonian circles with this propaganda. Notwithstanding Estonian insistence, the Soviet Russians had not, up to the present, declared themselves.....<sup>3</sup> to the publication of the well-known exchange of Notes,<sup>4</sup> so that the people could not be enlightened as to its true character. Õpik linked the desired German-Estonian action with an agreement on the press which would then represent an addition to the major political act. I stated, as I had already done to the Foreign Minister, that the Führer's speech of the 28th would possibly contain something about the relations of Germany with the Baltic countries. I could well understand Estonia's wish but the matter must first be considered. In the course of further discussion, I remarked, purely conversationally, that the Führer's declaration of readiness for a non-aggression pact had at the time only referred to Germany's neighbours. As was known we had upheld this position in the face of earlier Estonian soundings about a non-aggression pact<sup>5</sup>, doing so for general reasons not connected with German-Estonian relations. To this Õpik replied that Estonia did not regard it as an absolute necessity for [an agreement] to take the form of a non-aggression pact.

Estonia's desires evidently aim at turning the edge of any perhaps still forthcoming Anglo-Russian attempts to integrate Baltic territory into an encirclement system. In my opinion an exchange of Notes or a protocol could perhaps be considered in which the Estonians would communicate to us in writing, as confirmation of a previous exchange of views, their policy of neutrality and of holding aloof from groupings of Great Powers. In our Note in reply we could, basing ourselves on the Reich Foreign Minister's statement to the *Revalsche Zeitung* of last June,<sup>6</sup> confirm that we agree and regard an independent Estonia, as well as her policy, as a peace factor whose existence we consider important and in whose continued existence we therefore have a lively interest. The press agreement could be annexed. As I am seeing the Foreign Minister again on Wednesday and as indeed the statement which I have been directed to make in telegram No. 43<sup>7</sup> will of itself bring the subject up again, I should be grateful for earliest provisional

<sup>3</sup> The text as received was corrupt here. In the Tallinn draft (9623/E678920-22) the passage reads: "The Soviet Russians unfortunately had not up to the present declared themselves ready to agree. . . ."

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 196, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> The only previous reference to an Estonian suggestion for a non-aggression pact that has been traced in the Foreign Ministry archives is contained in a memorandum of June 17, 1936, on a conversation between Hitler and the Estonian Foreign Minister Akel (not printed, 116/66568-70).

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (1751/403925-26). This statement was published on June 18, 1938.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 246, which was telegram No. 43 to Tallinn.



instructions as to whether I should guide the wishes of the Estonians in the direction I have indicated and hold out the prospect of German agreement to an arrangement of this kind. The Estonians seem to envisage that a similar arrangement might be possible with Latvia also and could exert a favourable influence upon the wavering attitude of that country.

FROHWEIN

## No. 254

174/135903

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

TOKYO, April 24, 1939—8:03 p.m.

URGENT

Received April 24—3:30 p.m.

No. 168 of April 24

For the State Secretary.

There have been serious clashes in the Cabinet over the strengthening of the Pact.<sup>1</sup> I hear from well-informed circles that the Army is violently attacking the Foreign Minister because he has brought negotiations to a standstill by repeated directives of a restrictive nature to the chief Japanese negotiators in Berlin. The Army is determined to secure the alliance. This line is being increasingly supported by public opinion and press in the realization that *rapprochement* with Britain is only possible at the expense of successes gained on the mainland and that there is a danger of Japan being isolated. Reports of the possibility of Anglo-Russian cooperation in the Far East have the same effect. The position of the Foreign Minister has been shaken, and he is also accused of hampering his freedom of action by repeated assurances to the British Ambassador here. Prospects for negotiations are therefore favourable for Germany at the moment. Generous German assistance in the form of credits might, according to information repeatedly received, considerably weaken the main resistance, which emanates from industrial circles.

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., the Anti-Comintern Pact. See Editors' Note on p. 81 and document No. 70.

## No. 255

2422/511994

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 133 of April 24

WASHINGTON, April 24, 1939—9:15 p.m.

Received April 25—6:00 a.m.

Pol. IX 837.

A flood of well-meant suggestions and arguments for the Führer's speech is reaching the Embassy from all sections of the population. This sympathy shows both an understanding of Germany's interests and disapproval of Roosevelt's appeal. Many correspondents express their agreement with General Johnson's draft reply (given verbatim by DNB)<sup>1</sup> by sending in excerpts from it.

*Main Arguments:*

- 1) It is established that Roosevelt is taking sides against Germany and Italy, which makes him unfit for this arrogated role of mediator.
- 2) Roosevelt is setting himself up as the sponsor of the Versailles system and the European *status quo* despite Wilson's experiences and American disappointment after taking part in the World War.
- 3) If America has recourse to the Monroe Doctrine against intervention by Europe, Roosevelt's intervention in European and Asiatic spheres of interest is illogical and dangerous.
- 4) Britain and France have spent more on armaments during the last five years than the total of their war debts to America amounts to.
- 5) The need for Germany and Italy to expand is recognized by drawing a comparison between the herding together of 130 million Germans and Italians in an area the size of Texas and Oklahoma and the living space of the same number of Americans.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> The DNB report has not been found. Johnson's "draft answer" was printed in his column in the *Chicago Daily News* of Apr. 21.

## No. 256

1548/375975-76

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 161 of April 24

ROME, April 24, 1939—11:40 p.m.

Received April 25—3:10 a.m.

Pol. IV 2739.

Ciano, to whom I spoke today about his meeting with the Yugoslav

Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> said that there was in fact nothing to be added to the communiqué, of which you know, which could not be described as an ordinary final communiqué in the usual sense, but which reflected the spirit in general characterizing present Italian-Yugoslav relations. However, he wanted briefly to elucidate a few points which might interest the Reich Foreign Minister.

The Yugoslav Foreign Minister, who had not struck him as a personality of any particular consequence but whom he considered to be sincere, and with whom he had therefore spoken very frankly, had expressed himself very positively in favour of a steadily increasing *rapprochement* in Yugoslav foreign policy with the Axis Powers. The Yugoslavs, Cincar-Marković had told him, had categorically turned down every offer of a guarantee (Britain had, it is true, made no official enquiry about this, but—and Ciano too did not seem to think this out of the question—had at least sounded Belgrade) but wished, if the occasion arose, to remain strictly neutral while giving economic support to the Axis Powers. When Ciano asked whether the Yugoslavs would not be inclined to demonstrate this attitude by some kind of gesture, perhaps by accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact, Cincar-Marković, while agreeing in principle, made a reservation as to the exact time, pointing out the necessity for preparing public opinion, etc.

It had been agreed that the Albanian problem was finally settled and thus this question, formerly the only point of friction between them, had now become a reason for improving relations. When I asked if in this connection Ciano had mentioned Italy's intentions, of which he had once told me, of making Albania a powerful military bulwark, he answered with a smile that he had clearly stated that from now on Albania had become an integral part of Italy, an Italian province.

He had also stressed the common interest of Yugoslavia's neighbours (as a result of his recent conversations with Field Marshal Göring<sup>2</sup> and Count Csáky<sup>3</sup> he could also speak for us and for Hungary) in a strong and viable Yugoslavia, provided, of course, that she unequivocally followed our line in foreign policy.

Ciano thought he had noted in Yugoslavia's relations with Hungary a willingness for real *rapprochement*, even if he did not expect visible results overnight. What did seem to him important, however, was the observation that, as a result of the "numerous blunders" of Rumanian foreign policy recently, Yugoslavia in the question of the settlement of her relations with Hungary no longer felt obliged to show the same far-reaching consideration for Rumania as she still did at the time of his visit to Belgrade in January.<sup>4</sup> At present no visible gesture could be

<sup>1</sup> In Venice, Apr. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 205 and 211.

<sup>3</sup> Teleki and Csáky visited Rome, Apr. 18-21.

<sup>4</sup> Ciano visited Yugoslavia Jan. 19-22, 1939. See the *Ciano Diaries*, entries of Jan. 19-22.

expected in Yugoslavia's relations with the League of Nations. The Yugoslav delegation in Geneva, however, was already in the process of breaking up completely and at the given moment this would lead to the inevitable result.

Ciano concluded his observations firstly with the remark that in his opinion slight pressure from Berlin could bring considerably nearer the date of accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact, and secondly by recapitulating that there was readiness [on the part of Yugoslavia] to collaborate with the Axis but not yet the courage to profess this openly. Cincar had let slip the remark that any other policy was impossible for Yugoslavia.

In addition, Ciano observed, Cincar-Marković himself would be in Berlin the day after tomorrow.<sup>5</sup>

MACKENSEN

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<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 251, 262 and 272.

## No. 257

351/202535-37

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

No. A 788

Moscow, April 24, 1939.

Received April 26.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Roosevelt's action and Anglo-Soviet negotiations.

With reference to my report of April 17, No. A 722.<sup>1</sup>

On the 22nd inst., the Moscow press published a telegram from Roosevelt to Kalinin, the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, in which the President of the United States thanks Kalinin for his telegraphic expression of sympathy<sup>1</sup> on the occasion of Roosevelt's "message". The telegram reads:

"I have received your kind message and I am glad to learn that your views on my efforts in the cause of universal peace coincide with those expressed to me by the Heads of a number of other States."

While the Moscow daily papers continued to refrain from comment on Roosevelt's action, the two foreign language weeklies, *Journal de Moscou* and *Deutsche Zeitung*, commented on Roosevelt's message.

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (258/169351-52). In this report Tippelskirch commented on the reaction of the Moscow press to Roosevelt's message and repeated the text of Kalinin's telegram to Roosevelt, published on Apr. 16: "Mr. President, I consider it my pleasant duty to express to you profound sympathy and cordial congratulations on the noble appeal which you have addressed to the Governments of Germany and Italy. You may rest assured that your initiative will find the warmest reception in the hearts of the peoples of the Soviet Union, who are sincerely interested in the preservation of universal peace."

The *Deutsche Zeitung* described the message as an extremely valuable contribution to peace, the French paper spoke of a contribution towards clarifying the international situation. Both newspapers emphasize that the Soviet Union is always working for a consolidation of peace. It was therefore natural that the Soviet Government had "immediately welcomed" the message and "supported it clearly and in precise terms". These phrases clearly express the tactics so far pursued by the Soviet Government of leaving the initiative to other States and perhaps encouraging them while confining themselves to giving approval and support to such initiative.

It is worthy of note that in both articles the former open distrust of the policy of the two Western Powers and in particular of Britain has been slightly toned down. The *Journal de Moscou* wrote that the latest statements of the British Prime Minister and of the French Government represented "a step forward" towards clarifying the problems occupying the thoughts of peaceful nations, and the *Deutsche Zeitung* spoke of "certain first signs of a change of course in British government policy".

These cautious and, in view of British activity and the Anglo-Soviet negotiations—not mentioned at all in the Soviet press—extremely meagre statements indicate, however, that it would be premature to say that Moscow's distrust of Britain had been overcome. That distrust still exists is also shown by the statements in the *Journal de Moscou* on the possible dangers of the German and Italian answers to Roosevelt's message. The journal says that if the reply of the Axis Powers—and this it considers probable—were ostensibly peaceful, but evasive and ambiguous, there would be the danger that such replies would be exploited by circles which tried "systematically to support every manoeuvre of the aggressors" and which might perhaps once again succumb to "old illusions". If, however, the journal continues, the answers were bellicose, there would be a danger that they might intimidate certain people and cause fresh capitulations.

These press statements confirm anew that the attitude of the Soviet Government is still one of distrust and reserve. Regarding this attitude the Chief of the political administration of the Red Army recently said in a speech at Kiev that, unlike other States, the Soviet Union did not need to look for allies and to mobilize at a moment of panic. The far-sighted policy of the Soviet Union made it possible to await the course of events calmly but watchfully and fully armed.

Independently of the actions of Britain and France and apart from any results of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations, about which no detailed information can be obtained here, the Soviet Government have been endeavouring to do something of their own accord to increase their security. In so doing they have particular regions in view. Their efforts are directed in the first place towards the Baltic, a fact which is

illuminated by Litvinov's warning statements to Estonia and Latvia<sup>2</sup> backed up by military demonstrations on the frontier, and also by attempts to exert pressure on Finland.<sup>3</sup> Recently parallel efforts seem to be directed towards the Black Sea, as indicated by the pending negotiations with Turkey<sup>4</sup> and the visit of Potemkin, the Deputy Foreign Commissar, to Ankara.<sup>5</sup>

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 196, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> In reports from Helsinki of Mar. 27, Apr. 1 and Apr. 5 (not printed, 429/218669-73), Blücher stated that he had learned that, during the Finno-Soviet economic negotiations, the Soviet Government had put forward political demands, namely for obtaining control of certain Finnish islands in the Gulf of Finland, along the sea lane to Leningrad, either in exchange for territory in Karelia or on a lease basis, and that this issue had caused the negotiations to be broken off.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 85 of Apr. 7 (not printed, 2771/536880) Kroll had reported that Turkish-Russian conversations on Soviet economic aid to Turkey in the event of war were being conducted through the Turkish Embassy in Moscow.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 54 of Apr. 22 (not printed, 7799/E566138) Toppelskirch reported that he could not establish any concrete information on the Turkish-Soviet talks but that the nervous activity to be observed in the Turkish Embassy in Moscow left no doubt that such conversations were in fact in progress. This was confirmed by the fact that Potemkin was about to leave for Ankara.

## No. 258

2196/473576

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Bergen*

BERLIN, April 24, 1939.

Despatched by Air Courier on April 25, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON BERGEN: On behalf of the Foreign Minister I hereby inform you that it would be desirable for you to come to Berlin shortly for a visit of some eight to ten days. I am performing my commission, which I have just received, by means of a letter to you as we have a courier tomorrow, and am not telegraphing as Herr von Ribbentrop said I should do. This is perhaps the more convenient as, in so doing, I may express the wish that you treat your visit as a purely private one, for appearance's sake in Rome, while we, as I may state in strictest confidence, are desirous of discussing with you our relations with the Vatican. I would add that, apart from the Foreign Minister and myself, no one here knows anything of the official purpose of your visit.

Kindly let me know the time of your arrival by letter or telegram.<sup>1</sup>

I am, etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> In a telegram of May 9 (not printed, 8198/E583062), Bergen announced that he would be arriving on May 13. No memorandum on a conversation between Bergen and Ribbentrop or Weizsäcker during his visit to Berlin has been found in the archives of the Foreign Ministry.

## No. 259

1825/388624-25

*Circular of the State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

St. S.

BERLIN, April 25, 1939—10:00 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 1330.

We have received the following information here, from a strictly confidential but absolutely reliable source, regarding the attitude of Turkey:

Turkey sees in the Axis Powers, and in them alone, a potential enemy, especially in Italy, and orders her policy accordingly. She thus strives to secure the solidarity of the Balkan States against further penetration of the influence of the Axis Powers, and in particular to achieve a settlement between Bulgaria and Rumania, for which she has also requested British assistance. She also claims British aid for the defensive preparations which she has already undertaken, so that she can defend herself on land against the Axis countries, and she wishes to cooperate with Soviet Russia. In the event of war, she would pursue a policy of collaboration with Britain, but would tend to remain neutral until the Axis Powers take the offensive in the Mediterranean or the Balkans.

Acting upon these principles of conduct, the Turkish Government have apparently entered into conversations with the British Government which reach further than the Turks would care to tell us.

Owing to the confidential nature of the source, this information may not be used in any way.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Embassies at Ankara, London, Rome, Paris, Moscow and Warsaw, and the Legations at Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade and Athens.

## No. 260

7795/E566007

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Estonia*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, April 25, 1939—8:30 p.m.

No. 46 of April 25

Received April 25—9:51 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 41.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the Roosevelt Declaration and the Führer's forthcoming

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 253.

speech it does not seem to us possible, at least at present, to make political statements of the kind proposed *vis-à-vis* one of the countries mentioned by Roosevelt. We will consider the suggestion further, although, out of consideration for other States, it appears difficult to bring about the proposed special settlement for Estonia.

Therefore, in your conversations, please do not go beyond the statements of the Reich Foreign Minister in the special number of the *Revalsche Zeitung* of June 18, 1938.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 253.

## No. 261

1818/415357-58

### *The Embassy in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P 24

WARSAW, April 25, 1939.

Received April 26.

Pol. V 3581.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Public opinion in Poland.

The disputes which have dominated domestic politics in Poland since the death of Marshal Pilsudski<sup>1</sup> have receded somewhat into the background in the last few weeks, owing to the nightmare of the supposed German envelopment and the fear that demands will be made by Germany. The watchword under which the various political elements have come together, is: defence against the alleged German menace. This has had the initial result of strengthening the régime to a certain extent, but the Government must take account of the general hostility to Germany so as not to allow the Opposition to outdo it in demagoguery.

The unrestrained nature of the anti-German propaganda, designed to encourage the people by its arrogant emphasis on their own strength and by belittling the strength of the enemy, keeps the whole country in a state of great tension. The Opposition in particular gives full vent to its hatred of Germany, whereas the statements made in Government circles point after all to a desire to leave the way open for a *rapprochement*.

The warlike mood to which public opinion has worked itself up, especially by the mobilization, contributes above all towards strengthening the Army's political influence. The Commander-in-Chief of the

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<sup>1</sup> On May 12, 1935.



Army, Marshal Rydz-Smigly, who under the Constitution is the second man in the State, today enjoys the confidence of the whole country.

The German minority has to suffer special hardship on account of this warlike mood and anti-German feeling, although it is alleged that the Government authorities are endeavouring to prevent excesses. Numerous arrests and threats of all kinds are a daily occurrence.

There are as yet no visible signs of the present show of resolution giving way to a more compliant attitude. It is true that here and there, especially in the business world, certain doubts can be discerned, as economic life is suffering heavily in the present situation. However, no Government would dare to make substantial concessions in the present state of public opinion.

KRÜMMER

## No. 262

F14/063-71

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 26

BERLIN, April 25, 1939.

#### RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND M. CINCAR-MARKOVIĆ, THE YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER, ON APRIL 25, 1939

The Reich Foreign Minister received M. Cincar-Marković, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, at 6:30 p.m. today.

The Reich Foreign Minister began by expressing his satisfaction that Yugoslavia, guided in foreign policy by M. Cincar-Marković, who had a thorough knowledge of Germany from his many years as Minister in Berlin,<sup>1</sup> had not given way to any hysterical reactions during the recent crises. He congratulated the Yugoslav Foreign Minister on the quiet and dignified attitude of Yugoslavia in these times in contrast to other Powers. Although M. Cincar-Marković had been sufficiently familiar with Germany's policy, he would like once again to sketch briefly the Führer's course and intentions since 1933. The Führer's first aim had been to obliterate the Treaty of Versailles. This aim had been achieved on almost all important points. After the *Anschluss* with Austria, the liberation of the Sudetenland, and the incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia, historic provinces of the Reich, Germany had no more territorial demands to make in South Eastern Europe. In these places, and also in the Memel territory, the Führer had wiped out the sins of the Treaty of Versailles without a drop of blood being shed. It had been wrongly asserted that Germany had used force in these restitutions. The opposite was the case! The Czech President,

<sup>1</sup> Cincar-Marković had been Yugoslav Minister in Berlin, Dec. 1935-Feb. 1939.

Hácha, had personally proposed visiting Berlin and had declared spontaneously that he wished to place the destiny of his people confidently in the hands of the Führer. On the basis of this declaration, made by M. Hácha of his own accord, the well-known agreement for the peaceful incorporation of Bohemia and Moravia was then brought into being.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, President Hácha had told him before the negotiations started that he had always felt the formation of the Czecho-Slovak State since 1919 to be a calamity for the Czech people. The statement made by Sir Samuel Hoare in the House of Commons,<sup>3</sup> that Lithuania had been subjected to intolerable pressure concerning the cession of the Memel territory, was also pure invention. When Urbšys, the Foreign Minister, passed through Berlin,<sup>4</sup> he, the Reich Foreign Minister, had merely examined with him the Memel question, which was an affair between Lithuania and Germany. He had pointed out to him that the Memel territory, which was purely German, would always want to return to Germany. There was only one way for Lithuania to counteract this desire, and that was to use military force against the 140,000 German inhabitants of the Memel territory. But the Führer could not look on passively at another rape of the German national community. Foreign Minister Urbšys had thereupon declared that he quite understood this, and would report to his Government accordingly. Two days later he had communicated the information that the Government agreed with his view, and then the German-Lithuanian Agreement for the return of the Memel territory was concluded.<sup>5</sup>

For twenty-five years the Führer had aimed at bringing about a German-British understanding. Germany had made offer after offer to Britain without meeting with any response. Only the German-British Naval Agreement<sup>6</sup> had been brought about. Although at the time the conclusion of this Agreement had been of diplomatic advantage to Germany, it must not be forgotten that Germany had made a tremendous concession in concluding it, and for the reason which he, the Reich Foreign Minister, had himself stated at the final meeting of the German-British naval discussions, that Germany wanted to eliminate for ever the possibility of a German-British conflict. What had been the result of these endeavours? Britain had replied to Germany's peaceful efforts at revision with an hysterical outcry, and had begun the so-called encirclement propaganda. This outcry left Germany completely cold. Let there be no doubt about it, Germany could face calmly any combination of enemies. As was well known, the basis of German foreign policy was friendship with Italy, and, as Count Ciano

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 228 and 229.

<sup>3</sup> On Mar. 22. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 345, col. 1255.

<sup>4</sup> Urbšys had a conversation with Ribbentrop in Berlin on Mar. 20. See vol. v of this Series, document No. 399.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, documents Nos. 405, and footnote 2 thereto, and 406.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 277 and footnote 2 thereto.

would certainly have told M. Marković in Venice,<sup>7</sup> Italy too regarded the Axis as the unalterable basis of her policy. There was, in addition, a community of interests between the States founded on order [*Ordnungsstaaten*] and they had united in the Anti-Comintern Pact. The machinations of the Western Powers and of an hysterical American President, who was meeting with growing opposition even in his own camp, could have no effect on this group. Britain was at present trying to get certain countries to join in her policy, alleging that she would guarantee them against German and Italian expansionist desires. In practice, however, if there were a war Britain could give these countries no serious assistance. He, the Reich Foreign Minister, had only recently explained to M. Gafencu<sup>8</sup> that the British guarantee was completely worthless. From the military point of view the Eastern and South Eastern countries constituted no problem at all for Germany and Italy. In the West, Germany was protected by a strong line of fortifications against any attack by France and Britain. If the Western Powers wanted a war Germany was ready for it at any time, because she was armed; not in order to fight against the Eastern and South Eastern countries, but to wage, if necessary, a life and death struggle in the West. He could rest assured that, in case of necessity, Germany would fight for ten or twenty years with all the energy of her national strength which the unique personality of Adolf Hitler rendered twice as valuable as the number of divisions which Germany could put into the field—and the same applied to Italy under Mussolini's leadership. But Germany did not want war at all. In December Germany had made an unequivocal non-aggression agreement with France,<sup>9</sup> which was the expression of her true attitude. Furthermore, Germany had recognized Belgium's neutrality and made a similar offer to the Netherlands.<sup>10</sup> There were thus no directly opposing interests between Germany and Britain and it was possible to envisage that a settlement with Britain too might be reached some day, as soon as it was realized in London that it did not pay to run counter to Germany's vital interests. We lived in turbulent times, and who could say whether Britain might not one day tread the path of understanding. But in that case the British, who were cool calculators, would have no further consideration for the countries they had inveigled into an anti-German policy. The policy which Poland had followed during the last month seemed completely incomprehensible. The Führer had made Poland a tremendous offer, but in the middle of the negotiations Poland had answered this offer by mobilizing and concluding a pact of

<sup>7</sup> Ciano met Cincar-Marković in Venice, Apr. 22-23.

<sup>8</sup> See documents Nos. 227 and 234.

<sup>9</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 369.

<sup>10</sup> See Hitler's speech to the Reichstag on Jan. 30, 1937 (Baynas: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 1397) and the German Declaration to Belgium of Oct. 13, 1937 (vol. v of this Series, document No. 475). For the position of the Netherlands see *ibid.*, document No. 481.

assistance with Britain. Such folly seemed inexplicable, but perhaps Beck was a prisoner of the unrestrained anti-German propaganda carried on at home.

Going on to deal with the relations between Germany and Yugoslavia, the Reich Foreign Minister declared that fortunately there were no differences of any kind between our two countries. Germany was glad that a sincere and friendly relationship had also been established between Italy and Yugoslavia. Germany would also welcome it, if progress were made in the Yugoslav-Hungarian *rapprochement*. Hungary would have her hands full for many years after her revisionist claims against Czecho-Slovakia had been met, and he thought that Hungary also was prepared to make no claims for revision against Yugoslavia. A non-aggression pact between Yugoslavia and Hungary and an agreement on minorities would certainly be further factors in pacifying South Eastern Europe. He, the Reich Foreign Minister, thought it desirable, now that she had established friendly relations with her neighbours, that Yugoslavia should go one step further and join the bloc of States founded on order [*Ordnungsblock*], the Anti-Comintern Powers. It had been seen that the Anti-Comintern group had been least affected by the international unrest and the agitations of the Jewish-Bolshevist press. Yugoslavia was known always to have refused to have associations with Bolshevist Russia. Thus it seemed very desirable perhaps even for Yugoslavia's domestic situation, that she should accede to the Anti-Comintern Pact.

Foreign Minister Cincar-Marković agreed with the Reich Foreign Minister's statements on the political situation, and said that Yugoslavia's policy was clear, one could even say it was ordained by fate. Three years ago the Prince Regent had decided in favour of friendship with Germany and Italy, and he could assure the Reich Foreign Minister that Yugoslavia would not take part in any hostile action against the Axis Powers. She would in all circumstances remain neutral, and that was his final decision. Yugoslavia had given plenty of proof of this political attitude in the last three years; for instance, at the time of the occupation of the Rhineland,<sup>11</sup> in face of the attempts to extend the obligations towards Czecho-Slovakia, and in face of France's attempted pact-making. Britain also fully understood Yugoslav policy, and had therefore made no attempt to draw Yugoslavia into her system of guarantees, as Yugoslavia would have nothing to do with it. Yugoslavia's policy of friendship with Italy and Germany was now accepted by everyone. Stojadinović had pressed forward with this policy more in the Cabinet, while his (Marković's) task had been to popularize it as well. Yugoslavia was also fully prepared to enter into a further *rapprochement* with Hungary. Count Ciano had drawn

<sup>11</sup> In March, 1936.

particular attention in Venice to the value of an understanding, and he (Marković) hoped that the Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Csáky, would pay a visit to Belgrade in June.

Immediately after assuming office, he had discussed in detail with Prince Paul and his ministerial colleagues the question as to whether Yugoslavia should join the Anti-Comintern Pact at this juncture. He (Marković) personally had been very much in favour of joining, but the Prince Regent and the other Yugoslav Ministers were of the opinion that such a step would be premature. Public opinion in Yugoslavia would have to be educated more. His colleagues considered that Yugoslav public opinion, which was second to that of no other country in its anti-Bolshevist attitude, would not yet understand a decision to join the Pact. The chief reason for this was more the sentimental liking which the Yugoslav people had for the Russian people. In Yugoslavia the conviction prevailed that sooner or later the Bolshevik régime would have to give way to a new nationalist Russia. Public opinion in Yugoslavia therefore would not understand anything which could be regarded as being directed against this Russia. He fully understood that the Anti-Comintern Pact was only directed against the Soviet régime, but this had not yet been fully explained to the general public and some time was needed for this.

The Reich Foreign Minister once again urged M. Cincar-Marković not to lose sight of the matter. There would be an opportunity of discussing the matter again at the forthcoming State visit of Prince Paul at the beginning of June, and he hoped that the Yugoslav Government would have come to a decision by then.

M. Cincar-Marković promised to deal with the matter further and to draw attention to its urgency, as both the German Foreign Minister and Count Ciano attached particular importance to it.

The Yugoslav Government had negotiated with Consul General Neuhausen in Belgrade regarding a 200 million credit,<sup>12</sup> but the negotiations had not yet been concluded. The Yugoslav Government were especially interested in ordering war equipment, particularly artillery and aircraft, from Germany. Yugoslavia had made a similar credit agreement for 500 million Lire with Italy.<sup>13</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister said that he had been very pleased at the progress of trade between Germany and Yugoslavia during the last few years. He had monthly reports made to him regarding the figures. With regard to the credit negotiations between Germany and Yugoslavia, he would obtain information on the present position from the competent officials, so that he could then discuss the matter afresh with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 142.

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 168.

At the conclusion of the conversation, the Reich Foreign Minister asked M. Cincar-Marković whether Yugoslavia was willing to leave the League of Nations. M. Cincar-Marković replied that Yugoslavia had dissolved the permanent Delegation in Geneva and had accredited a Minister to Berne. Yugoslavia regarded the League of Nations as defunct, as had been shown by the dissolution of her Delegation.

In further conversation, the Reich Foreign Minister declared that he would urge a generous solution of the credit question.

E[RICH] K[ORDT]

### No. 263

F14/083

#### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 25

BERLIN, April 25, 1939.

The Netherlands Minister, to whom I pointed out today the absurdity of the rumours about German intentions against the Netherlands and of the Dutch military measures,<sup>1</sup> assured me on his word of honour that the Netherlands had not entered into any kind of obligation with any country, but adhered to the strict neutrality which was the basis of their foreign policy.

I told the Netherlands Minister that we also regarded the neutrality of the Netherlands both in peace and war as inviolable, and that in wartime their neutrality could be only to our advantage, as such neutral countries could be of assistance to our economic relations and our trade with other countries.

The Minister took grateful note of this and promised to work for calming the atmosphere at home and bringing about a reduction in the military measures. He had satisfied himself that a reduction in the latter was already in progress.

Afterwards I made some statements of principles on the political situation.

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>1</sup> On Apr. 10, 1939, the Netherlands Government proclaimed a state of "danger of war" and ordered the call-up of all frontier defence units. This call-up was explained by Minister President Colijn, in a broadcast on Apr. 11, as merely a precautionary measure taken to ensure that preparations for full mobilization, which, if necessary, would be ordered for the defence of Dutch independence and neutrality, could proceed undisturbed. In a memorandum, St.S. No. 330 of Apr. 12 (not printed, 2134/467341), Weizsäcker recorded that the Netherlands Minister had given him an explanation of his Government's military measures along the lines of Dr. Colijn's speech. A despatch, Pol. II 1210 of Apr. 22 (not printed, 1880/424489-90), informed the Missions in London, Brussels, The Hague and Berne that the Netherlands Minister had called again on Apr. 14 and had explained the measures as being merely designed to bring the frontier forces up to a strength corresponding to that of Belgium and Switzerland.

## No. 264

2422/511723-25

*Note by Ambassador Dieckhoff*<sup>1</sup>B[ERLIN], April 25, 1939.  
zu Pol. IX 858.<sup>2</sup>

To the State Secretary.

I should like to propose that Thomsen be asked by telegram to give an opinion on Roosevelt's alleged declaration.<sup>2</sup> It is my opinion—an opinion which coincides with the view expressed in the appended letter from Washington of April 12—that Roosevelt will, if need be, act in exactly the same way as Wilson did. At first Wilson also declared that he did not wish to enter any war, and then he did do so with the entire might of the United States—expeditionary force, fleet, etc. I am convinced that Roosevelt intends, if necessary, to act in the same way, and I do not believe that there are elements in the USA which have courage enough or are strong enough to prevent this.

I believe the matter is important enough to justify asking Thomsen whether it can be assumed for certain that, in the event of war, no expeditionary force will be despatched.<sup>3</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> The German Ambassador in Washington, who had been recalled in November, 1938, and was employed on special duties in the Foreign Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 267.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "H[err] v. Schubert. Draft telegram, please. Of course, Th[omsen] should undertake no *démarche*. W[oermann]."

7800/E566147-48

[Enclosure]<sup>4</sup>

April 12, 1939.

For the moment it looks as if the war-mongers, who want America to fight for our frontiers in Albania and on the Rhine, are on the run. But appearances are deceptive. The revulsion in Congress against shipping Americans abroad to fight the battles of England and France, the protest in the press, including the powerful arguments by Hoover and the smashing editorial in the *Saturday Evening Post*, the denunciation of war on the side of Soviet Russia by Catholic Bishops, are not without effect in Washington. The Administration pretends to yield a point. Some of its most fervent spokesmen hypocritically pretend that they do not want us embroiled in Europe's war. Some believe their own protestations. They imagine that it is possible to bluff the Axis. But the real object of this apparent yielding is to disarm the

<sup>4</sup> This enclosure is in English in the original.

opposition. The great democrat, Walter Winchell, said over the radio in honeyed accents: "The place of American boys is on top of American soil, not under the mud of Europe". Mr. Oursler, whose attitude is known to you, insisted over the radio that we must keep out of Europe's mess, but at the same time everything is being done to get us into that mess. The President himself added to the panic and confusion by his deliberate remark that he would be glad to come back to the South, if we are not at war. Barney Baruch says we must keep out of war; Lippmann says, we can keep out of war, if we sternly face the Dictators now.

The strategy of all this is obvious. I am just reading Mr. Villard's memoirs. Wilson told him on one occasion: "I assure you, we'll not get into this war, as long as I am President",—or words to that effect. He permitted himself to be elected "because he kept us out of war". The rest is history. If Wilson's successor has his way, history will repeat itself. While protesting that we shall stay out of war to prevent the crystallization of all the anti-war forces, the Administration is bringing us step by step nearer to the precipice. Once the guns go off, we will be so near the edge that we can't keep ourselves from rolling into the abyss. We may, of course, try to stay out for a little while, but once England and France have their back to the wall, we'll go in. There is little pretense that we will not. The friends of peace may be willing to make all sorts of concessions to the Administration, because some of them will believe the pacific confessions of Administration spokesmen, but once the power is in the hands of the Executive, he will use it, ruthlessly. That, at least, is the opinion of well-informed circles. It is the conclusion which I myself have reached.

There were great promises of appeasement for business, breathing spells, etc., but the Administration, in spite of such verbal concessions, continued its way and business continues to go to the Devil. The Administration, which is itself largely responsible for the unrest in the world, can blame its domestic failure on the Dictators. If there is no war, or if we keep out of war—because popular resentment against another war to make the world safe for democracy, is too strong—the Administration can always claim that such was its policy and boast of keeping us out of it. But no one who knows what is going on in Mr. Roosevelt's mind, doubts his Messianic complex and his desire to play a great historic role; greater than that of Theodore, who did not have the opportunity to participate in a World War. Everything will be done to build up a war-psychosis. Insults will continue to be heaped upon the Axis, unless it is possible to detach Mussolini. When The Day comes, if it comes, there will be conscription in Canada as well as in the United States, in spite of all pious protestations to the contrary. We shall be with both our feet in the war to end civilization. That is why I am opposing the war-mongers and shall continue to do so at any personal sacrifice.



## No. 265

2590/524709-10

*Minister Renthe-Fink to Senior Counsellor Grundherr*

159 B

COPENHAGEN, April 25, 1939.

Kult. A 1417 (g).

DEAR GRUNDHERR: Regarding the report of the Consulate in Aabenraa—29 g—of April 17, 1939, on the formation of an SS company from inhabitants of North Schleswig, a copy of which I enclose, I would be glad if you would let me know further details, and what the official view is.

I recollect that when he was with you Minister Frohwein told you something similar about Estonia.<sup>1</sup>

With best wishes,

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

RENTHÉ-FINK

<sup>1</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "To Cultural Policy Department, Herr von Twardowski. Forwarded to you, as the proper authority, with reference to the telephone discussion and to Minister Frohwein's letter—A 210—of May 3. Grundherr 5/5". In letter A 210 of May 3 (not printed, 3023/599058-60) Frohwein advised Twardowski of the undesirability of recruiting young *Volksdeutsche* in Estonia for the SS.

[Enclosure]

J. No. 29 g

AABENRAA, April 17, 1939.

Kult. A 1417 (g).

Subject: Formation of an SS Company from inhabitants of North Schleswig.

I have heard the following from a reliable source:

At the beginning of the year a discussion took place at Flensburg between an SS Oberführer from Berlin and three NSDAPN[ordschleswig] officials. The SS Oberführer stated that he came with the very highest authority and that an SS Company was to be formed from young *Volksdeutsche* of North Schleswig. About 500 men would have to be made available for this. The Party officials objected that this figure was far too high as the German national group could not endure such a drain on its resources and the flower of the rising generation would be involved. The reply to this was that the order came from the very highest level and such a drain would have to be endured. It was then agreed that 150 men should be made available. The affair was treated secretly at first, but in the course of time it was discussed at Party meetings in order to obtain suitable applicants. These are soon to be examined at Flensburg for their fitness. It is not yet certain when they will be called up for training.

It is to be expected that when this becomes known those involved will come into conflict with the Danish authorities and will have to bear the consequences. It is also probable that the Danish press will seize upon the affair and exploit it politically for their purposes.

A copy of this report is being sent to the Legation in Copenhagen.

LACHMANN

## No. 266

174/135904

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 170 of April 26

Tokyo, April 26, 1939—5:00 p.m.

Received April 26—12:40 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 168 of April 24.<sup>1</sup>

For the State Secretary.

Influenced by the repeated conferences of Ministers, which are even taking place on holidays, the Japanese press is continuing to exert strong pressure on the Government to declare themselves unequivocally in favour of strengthening the Anti-Comintern Pact.

2. At a meeting with the Vice Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> I drew his attention to the fact that a public statement of the Japanese attitude to the Anglo-Russian consultations on the Far East would, in my opinion, be desirable before the Führer's speech,<sup>3</sup> especially as the hesitant attitude of the Government was obviously at variance with popular feeling. The Vice Foreign Minister promised to pass my suggestion on to the Foreign Minister.<sup>4</sup>

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 254.

<sup>2</sup> Renzo Sawada.

<sup>3</sup> On Apr. 28. See Editors' Note on p. 355.

<sup>4</sup> Hachiro Arita.

## No. 267

2422/D511722

### *The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in the United States*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, April 26, 1939—5:35 p.m.

No. 125 of April 26

e.o. Pol IX 858.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor of Legation v. Schubert.

DNB of 24th inst.<sup>1</sup> from New York transmits an agency report

<sup>1</sup> No. 113 of Apr. 24 (not printed, 7800/E566146).

from Washington according to which Roosevelt is said to have informed visitors to the White House, during a discussion on foreign policy, that, so long as he, Roosevelt, was in office, no American expeditionary force would be despatched to Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Please report by telegram, after consultation with the Service Attachés, whether, from the impression you have gained there, it can safely be assumed that, in case of war, no expeditionary force will be sent. Please refrain from putting out official feelers.

WOERMANN

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 264.

## No. 268

2422/511726

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry* Telegram

MOST URGENT

WASHINGTON, April 26, 1939—8:03 p.m.

No. 139 of April 26

Received April 27—4:30 a.m.

Pol. IX 877.

With reference to your telegram No. 125 of April 26.<sup>1</sup>

The news of Roosevelt's declaration has only appeared in a few of New York's sensational newspapers, and has nowhere been seriously confirmed. According to the Service Attachés' observations, a defence army of 400,000 men, which would be brought up to some 50 divisions in about seven months, would first of all be raised in case of war. This time would be necessary in view of the need to get industrial mobilization under way. Earlier despatch of an expeditionary force is most unlikely. The despatch of air force units during the same period is hardly to be expected. The use of the fleet in the Atlantic Ocean is not likely as long as Japan's attitude is doubtful. American operational plans provide for strategic defence on the Pacific and Atlantic fronts, but not for the despatch of an expeditionary force. See Bötticher's report of March 28,<sup>2</sup> telegrams of both Service Attachés of April 17,<sup>2</sup> Bötticher's report of April 18,<sup>2</sup> which will arrive by the *Hansa* in the next few days, and the Embassy's reports, especially the report No. 556 of March 27.<sup>3</sup>

The answer to the question therefore is that, during the first six months of a war, the despatch of an American expeditionary force is not to be expected. Beyond this point further developments can naturally not be foreseen. Public opinion is at present predominantly against sending American troops to a theatre of war outside America.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 107.

## No. 269

1625/388623-30

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, April 26, 1939—9:50 p.m.

No. 144 of April 26

Received April 26—11:45 p.m.

Pol. II 1372.

With reference to my telegram No. 136,<sup>1</sup>

I learn from a reliable source that the British Government will give an answer to the Soviet Government through their Ambassador in Moscow<sup>2</sup> this evening or tomorrow morning regarding the Soviet Russian counter proposals, reported in my above-mentioned telegram. The answer is tantamount to a rejection, although it is cloaked in the form of comments on the Soviet Russian counter proposals.

1) The main body of the Note is concerned with the rejection of the Three Power pact for mutual assistance between Britain, France, and Soviet Russia, proposed by Russia. Thus the military agreements, which would supplement this pact, also fall through.

2) The British Government point out that the guarantee given by them to Poland and Rumania is directed against any aggression of which these countries might be the victims. This means a rejection of the Soviet Russian attempt to strip the existing Treaties between Poland and Rumania of their anti-Soviet bias and to render them effective solely against the West. The Soviet Russian proposals reported under paras. 3 and 4 of my telegram No. 136 meant in practice that Great Britain and France would from the start have to specify the aggressor (namely Germany) against whom their guarantee declarations could be made effective.

The decisive reason for rejecting the Soviet Russian proposal for a Three Power pact was that, in the event of an attack by Germany on France and Britain, Russia as well as Poland would be obliged to render assistance. That would put Poland in an embarrassing situation which she wishes to avoid at all costs. Poland and Rumania will in no circumstances accept unsolicited assistance from Soviet Russia.

KORDT

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 239.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Seeds.

## No. 270

F9/0301-298

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, April 26, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

No. 136

Only for the Ambassador personally.

For quite a long time top secret discussions have been taking place between Berlin, Rome and Tokyo with a view to concluding a defensive alliance and, for special reasons and in accordance with arrangements made with the other parties, have been conducted outside the usual diplomatic channels.<sup>2</sup>

In the summer of 1938 General Oshima, who was then still Military Attaché, gave the information that in the opinion of the Japanese Army the time had come to conclude a general defensive alliance between Germany, Italy and Japan. He cited as terms of a pact of alliance:

1. Consultations between the three Powers, in the event of one of them becoming involved in political difficulties;
2. Political and economic support, in the event of one of the three Powers being threatened from outside;
3. Rendering of aid and assistance, in the event of one of the three Powers being the victim of an unprovoked attack by another Power.

On the occasion of the Munich Conference at the end of September the matter was discussed with Mussolini and Count Ciano. This discussion was continued during my visit to Rome at the end of October<sup>3</sup> with the result that the Duce declared his agreement in principle, but reserved the fixing of a date for concluding the pact. At the beginning of January the Italian Foreign Minister made it known that the Duce was then ready to sign.<sup>4</sup>

The text of the treaty was drawn up during direct negotiations between Oshima, Ciano and myself, and it contained, in addition to the above three points, the undertaking that, in the event of a war fought jointly, the armistice and peace should only be concluded jointly, and it fixed the duration of the treaty at ten years. The draft of the treaty was further supplemented by a draft of two secret protocols which provided for an immediate agreement on the implementation

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Ribbentrop was in Rome, Oct. 27-29, 1938. See vol. rv of this Series, document No. 400.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 421.

of mutual assistance undertakings in the various contingencies in question, and also special arrangements for dealing jointly with propaganda and press questions. Oshima despatched drafts by special courier to Tokyo where they were made the subject of Cabinet deliberations.<sup>5</sup>

At the beginning of March Oshima and also Ambassador Shiratori in Rome received instructions, according to which the Japanese Government, although they were in general agreement with the idea of a pact, wished to limit the obligation to render mutual assistance exclusively to the contingency of war with Russia. Both Ambassadors informed Ciano and myself of this as a purely personal and confidential matter, but on their own initiative they immediately informed Tokyo that they refused to submit so substantial a modification of the German-Italian draft in Berlin and Rome. They once more advocated acceptance of the original proposal and stated that they would have to resign if the Japanese Cabinet decided otherwise.<sup>6</sup>

Then at the beginning of April a Japanese draft<sup>7</sup> arrived from Tokyo which corresponded to the German-Italian draft in essentials, though it reduced the duration of the treaty to five years. The previous Japanese desire to limit the mutual assistance undertaking exclusively to the Russian contingency was, however, still maintained in the milder form of the Japanese requesting our express approval for them to make a statement to the British, French and American Ambassadors after the signature and publication of the pact somewhat on the following lines: The pact had developed out of the Anti-Comintern Pact; in concluding it the parties had envisaged Russia as the opponent in war; Britain, France and America had no need to consider the pact as directed against them. The Tokyo Cabinet cited as proof of the necessity for such a restrictive interpretation of the pact the fact that for political and especially economic reasons Japan was at present not yet in a position to come out openly as an opponent of the three democracies. Oshima and Shiratori told Tokyo that this desire of the Japanese Government was also impossible and informed Count Ciano and myself, again confidentially, of the matter. Both Ciano and I left no doubt that the conclusion of a treaty with this interpretation, which was completely at variance with the text of the treaty, could not be considered by us. Moreover, in order to accelerate final clarification, I told Oshima and Shiratori, who was in Berlin for the Führer's birthday,<sup>8</sup> that I must know the final decision, positive or negative, of the Japanese Cabinet before the Führer's speech on April 28. Both Ambassadors reported this to Tokyo by telegram.

<sup>5</sup> See also *ibid.*, documents Nos. 542 and 543.

<sup>6</sup> See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of Mar. 8, 1939.

<sup>7</sup> Not found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. The draft is printed in Toscano: *Le Origini del Patto d'Acciaio*, pp. 105-107. See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of Apr. 2, 1939.

<sup>8</sup> On Apr. 20.

The above communication is intended solely for your personal information. Please treat it as strictly secret, do not touch on the matter yourself in conversations in Tokyo until further notice, and if you are asked about it from the other side, do not in any way reveal that you have been informed. This applies even *vis-à-vis* the Italian Ambassador in Tokyo, who, according to a communication from Ciano, has not been informed so far. On the other hand please observe developments at your end carefully and continue to report on them by telegram.

RIBBENTROP

### No. 271

F14/072-032

#### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND THE YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER, MARKOVIĆ, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER, THE YUGOSLAV MINISTER AND MINISTER MEISSNER ON  
APRIL 21 [*sic*], 1939<sup>1</sup>

The Führer welcomed the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, saying that he came at a time, not of disturbance it was true, but of excitement, which was marked by an artificial nervousness and hysteria which was being deliberately fostered in some countries. He thought that the German people alone were free from all that. If he (Marković) could live in Germany he would certainly notice this. On the other hand, however, the German army stood in readiness, and he only needed to press a button and the whole machine would be set in motion. All this excitement in the world seemed to him like a storm in a teacup. He was of opinion, however, that one could only yell for a certain time. If anybody shouted too long, other people would not hear it any more. The internal solidarity of the countries would be destroyed, so the clamour about armaments left him stone cold. He could best judge other peoples' rearmament as he was the greatest master of rearmament, and knew what encroachments on private life were necessary, and what a colossal industry was needed to carry out a really large scale rearmament. This was only possible with a people educated anew, and there had also to be stricter press control than was possible in the democratic countries. In steel production alone it could be seen how much the others were bluffing. Thus, for instance, the consumption of steel in Germany was 27,000 tons [*sic*], and in France and Britain together it was only 16,000 tons [*sic*]. Armaments were not made from newspaper twaddle but from steel. In the play of forces in the democratic countries it was a strange phenomenon that the newspapers

<sup>1</sup> The conversation took place on Apr. 26.

were compelled to be more nationalistic than the Governments themselves. There was a time when he too had shouted; it could be done as long as one had no direct responsibility oneself. He, the Führer, had been accused of pursuing a wrong policy towards Poland, but in his opinion one must also know how to give way in a reasonable manner in order to avoid great bloodshed when such was not really necessary. The newspapers must of course go on shouting louder and louder in order to be heard, even though they could not bear the responsibility for the demands they were making. This applied particularly to America, where the newspapers caused constant sensations, and where the incompetent economic administration certainly provided enough matter. He did not think Mr. Roosevelt would be very happy on Friday. It was [*sic?* not] the first time that an opponent had publicly challenged him to a discussion and had afterwards greatly regretted it. He was one of those people who did everything that was necessary and also had a great deal of time for theatres and concerts, and thus regarded the whole course of events calmly. The German people had the greatest capacity for work in the world, and their 90 millions were for him the best guarantee of reaching his political objective.

He then turned to the policy towards Yugoslavia, saying that if he was at present amicably disposed to Marković, he did not adopt that attitude for today only, it was a course he had always followed *vis-à-vis* Yugoslavia. He was not saying this just to him, but to Yugoslavia as such. He expressed the wish that Yugoslavia would come to terms with Hungary. This was surely not so difficult. Hungary had now swallowed a great deal and needed many years to digest it. The social differences in present-day Hungary and its attached territories were immense. The present State of Slovakia had more progressive legislation than Hungary. Hungary was fairly well satiated. Hungary and Rumania reminded him of two dogs facing each other on opposite sides of a fence, barking and jumping up against it both together, but glad to have the fence between them so that they could not bite each other. For Hungary was very busily occupied at home. He considered that Hungarian social legislation was totally unsuited to settle the differences now arising there. However, Imrédy had not resigned because of his Jewish great-great-grandmother but because the big landowners in Hungary were afraid of reform.<sup>2</sup> He thought that Hungary would have to keep quiet now for a long time. He had always told the Yugoslavs,<sup>3</sup> and he repeated it today, that their best defence against Hungary lay in treating the Germans in Yugoslavia well. Previously he, the Führer, had not been so well in the picture, for after all he could not have known all important matters. The first time that this problem

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<sup>2</sup> Imrédy resigned on Feb. 15, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> See also vol. v of this Series, document No. 163.



had been clearly brought to his notice was at the Party Rally at Nuremberg, when a German deputation there asked him to intervene so that they should not revert to Hungary. The treatment of the Germans in Yugoslavia was much better than in Hungary, and Yugoslavia had a good guarantee in these Germans. True there were only a few—100,000—but they had many associations with the German Reich, not only through him, the Führer, but throughout the whole nation. It was a good thing when the relationship between two peoples was sealed not by two men but also by the feelings and sympathies of the peoples themselves. The Germans in Yugoslavia were the best advocates for Yugoslavia in the Reich. The German people today were greatly averse to an increase of territory by Hungary. That, too, had been one of his main reasons for taking action to maintain Slovakia. Slovakia was of no consequence militarily, neither was she an asset-economically, so that he had no direct interest in her preservation, only the fate of the Germans had influenced him.

Hungary had Germany to thank for everything, but in return he had been heaped with abuse by Hungary. He described once more the motives which led to the Vienna Arbitral Award,<sup>4</sup> and his plans for a Reich *Autobahn* to Rumania, and then gave the reasons which finally led him to give up the Carpatho-Ukraine. There was no sense in defending something untenable, and so he had declared himself disinterested in the Ukraine.

To him, with his eyes on the distant future, a strong Yugoslavia was very important and he was firmly convinced that Italy held the same opinion, since she would rather see Yugoslavia than Hungary on the Adriatic. Unless Yugoslavia made very bad blunders she would certainly have Italy as guarantor of her integrity, as she preferred Yugoslavia to a country of 25 millions stretching from the Carpathians to the Ukraine. Someone had once said to him that he should induce Italy to give Germany an outlet to the Adriatic. But that was complete nonsense as he had enough ports, and he had only been given this advice so that he could be used as a cover, and such claims there be attributed to him. "My frontiers down there are final and permanent." He was no displacer of frontiers. His first aim was the security of the State, he had regarded the Czech State as an enemy because it had been the world's largest arsenal against Germany. He spoke of the huge quantities of arms found there. He had drawn up frontiers which were clear to anyone who could think in military terms, but even that would not have been necessary and one could have arrived at a quite different solution if the attitude there [in Prague] had been different.

The aim of all of us must be to bring tranquillity to Europe. He had

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 99.

settled things in the West, the South, and the South-East, and he did not want to alter any more frontiers. He had also finished with Hungary and he was content with the Yugoslav frontier; the same applied to Italy.

Germany and Italy were not thinking of any new causes of friction down in that direction. He had always said that, and he thought that Yugoslavia's chance lay in pursuing a policy which Italy would regard as loyal. Italy would in any case not want Greater Hungary on the Adriatic, she had not fought Austria-Hungary for that. He was firmly convinced that Italy was really in earnest. If the Yugoslavs wanted to keep their country free and independent that was the only policy to follow. One could call oneself lucky if one could bring one's interests into harmony with one's neighbours. In this connection it would not be just a matter of tactics if Italy were to invite Yugoslavia to join the Anti-Comintern Pact, rather for Italy such a step would mean obtaining a clear definition of Yugoslavia's attitude towards her, and a guarantee of collaboration. Mussolini had once said much the same thing to him. Italian friendship with Hungary did not preclude friendship with Yugoslavia. Mussolini was one of the greatest personalities in world history, a man of stout heart, brave and clever, and that was the guarantee that he thought logically. Marković interjected that Yugoslavia was faithfully pursuing such a policy. The Führer thought that Yugoslavia could view her future calmly as few countries in Europe could do. If a Hungarian were with him today and were to speak to him about revision at Yugoslavia's expense, he would tell him that he would have Germany as an enemy. Not only would we not welcome such a step by Hungary, we would simply not tolerate it. Moreover our economic relations with Yugoslavia were so good that we should, in any case, take that view for reasons of self-preservation. We should not make as much fuss as Britain. Britain did not want to help, but needed many people to help her, for the situation in Britain was not very good and she was having a lot of trouble keeping her Empire together. He went on to speak of the colossal achievements of the Japanese, who had conquered an area in China three times as large as Germany. People sometimes chattered about Chiang Kai-shek collecting reserve troops to attack Japan, but that was absolute nonsense and the German generals laughed at it. Moreover Britain had lost one of her aptitudes, that of businesslike calculation, which consisted not only in putting money into something or other, but in knowing when to stop putting it in, and she seemingly lacked the strength nowadays to do this. Czechia was a good example and, most recently, China.

Japan was the foremost Power in the Far East, and Britain was in no position at all to undertake anything against Japan, just as Italy was the Power in the Mediterranean. In Spain there was great hatred

for the democracies because of their infamous conduct during the Spanish Civil War. The British had not introduced universal conscription<sup>5</sup> because of Germany but from the feeling that the young and healthy States would one day rebel against the machinations in Europe. The introduction of compulsory service would not have its full effect for seven years and he gave the reasons for this. The Führer went on to say that if he ever went to war with a country he would not take Britain into consideration at all, and if the whole Empire came to the help of that country it would matter little to him. The Führer then spoke of the strength and reliability of the Italian forces, and talked in detail about the experience which Germany had had with Italian airmen etc. in Spain. He spoke of the heroic deeds of our own airmen, and thought that for one Italian seven enemy planes were shot down. Progress in Italy was tremendous, and he mentioned in this connection a report from Göring who had expressed particular admiration for the three divisions which he inspected in Libya. The Führer thought we should form an "ad hoc Association" [*Zweckverband*]. We had no interest whatever in any alteration in the South-East, and if the Hungarians wanted a change in frontiers he would categorically reject it. "I give you my assurance on that." Italy was in complete agreement.

The Führer stated that he viewed the future very calmly, and Marković said that he had good reason to say so. The Führer said that whatever the others might do left him cold. He spoke of the West Wall and compared it with the Maginot Line, which he said was a great piece of bluff and a bungled job. It was better to spend milliards on peace rather than on war. There was always the risk with the French that they would do something stupid. In their home politics, and especially in their press, they were hysterical. The British with their guarantee offers reminded him of hawkers offering brushes for sale and saying they would just leave them, without any obligation. After a fortnight they arrived to present the bill, and anyhow the brushes were not even worth anything. Marković confirmed that Yugoslavia would never allow herself to be drawn into such a combination. In conclusion the Führer said that one day the British would again approach us with proposals.

The conversation was brought to an end after the Führer had again expressed his pleasure at the good relations with Yugoslavia, saying that they had existed ever since he came to power.<sup>6</sup>

HEWEL

<sup>5</sup> On Apr. 26 Chamberlain stated in the British House of Commons that the Government had decided to introduce a Bill providing for compulsory military service. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 346, cols. 1150-1154.

<sup>6</sup> In a circular telegram of May 4 addressed to the principal Missions in Europe (not printed, 3043/600708) Weizsäcker summarized this conversation, adding for their confidential information that Ribbentrop had promised the Yugoslav Foreign Minister to give generous treatment to the Yugoslav request for war material on a long-term credit.

## No. 272

375/208941-42

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 366

BERLIN, April 26, 1939.

The British Ambassador, who came to the Foreign Ministry today to announce Chamberlain's conscription statement,<sup>1</sup> made a few general remarks to me during his visit to the following effect:

He had returned here,<sup>2</sup> but in a more troubled frame of mind than in February, for since then feeling between Britain and Germany had undergone a very real change. When one re-read the Führer's letter to Chamberlain of September 27<sup>3</sup> in which the former denied that there would be any seizure of Czechoslovak territory and offered a formal guarantee for the remainder of Czechoslovakia, it was not surprising that in Britain Chamberlain was considered to have been duped. He, Henderson, had also taken the wrong line and had sent home wrong reports before the occupation of the whole of Czechoslovakia. That had severely prejudiced the value of his judgement at the Foreign Office, and the press on both sides did the rest. If there were now further incidents (in Poland for instance) one could not tell where the matter would end.

Neville Henderson then spoke as follows in formal terms:

Chamberlain's policy was one of peace, but Chamberlain believed that the best way of maintaining peace was for Britain to demonstrate beyond any doubt that in case of necessity she was ready to fight, and to defend herself against an attack. However, the British Government were, as always, determined to do everything in their power to maintain peace, and to seek a satisfactory solution to the existing difficulties without having recourse to war. The Government did not deny that problems existed, but they were convinced that they could be solved without a world war. The Government had no aggressive intentions, neither did they wish to be drawn into aggressive action by others. When they had publicly announced that they were prepared in certain specified cases to oppose any aggressive action by other countries, they had done so in the hope of avoiding incidents which might lead to war, and not by any means in order to encircle or threaten Italy or Germany in any way.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 271, footnote 5. In a further memorandum, St.S. No. 367 of Apr. 26 (not printed, 2166/470822), Weizsäcker recorded that Henderson had, during this interview, handed him an *aide-memoire* (2166/470823-24) dealing with Chamberlain's conscription announcement. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 284, 288 and 289.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Neville Henderson, who had been recalled to London on Mar. 17, had returned to Berlin on Apr. 25. See documents Nos. 16 and 25.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 635.

I answered this prepared statement of Henderson's quite briefly with the remark that we judged the British Government by their deeds and not by their words. There was also no point in my entering into a discussion, when the Führer was going to speak the day after tomorrow—his speech had already gone to press. But there was one remark which I could not refrain from making, namely, that the British guarantee to Poland was certainly the surest way of encouraging the minor Polish officials in their oppression of the Germans there. Therefore, it did not prevent, but definitely provoked, incidents in that territory.

Henderson then said that the Führer's speech, at the present juncture, would be an epoch-making one. He, Henderson, would not cease to work towards a favourable solution, and all was not yet lost.

After saying a few words about his involuntary absence, Henderson asked me to arrange for him to visit the Foreign Minister at an early date, and he then spoke about private matters.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 273

2771/536893

#### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
St.S.

BERLIN, April 27, 1939.<sup>1</sup>  
e.o. Pol. I g.

For the Chargé d'Affaires personally.

Please arrange for an interview at the Foreign Office for tomorrow at noon, for the purpose of handing over a political memorandum.<sup>2</sup>

The Führer will begin his speech at 12 noon and we regard it as important that the memorandum be handed over at the same time. Your instructions will be completed when you have handed over the Memorandum, to which nothing is to be added by word of mouth.

The Memorandum will arrive by special courier. The time of arrival will be given later.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 277.

## No. 274

908/293964

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Poland*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
St.S. No. 111BERLIN, April 27, 1939—1:45 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. V 998 g.

For Chargé d'Affaires personally.

Please arrange for an interview at the Foreign Ministry for tomorrow at noon, for the purpose of handing over a political Memorandum.<sup>1</sup>

The Führer will begin his speech at 12 noon and we regard it as important that the Memorandum be handed over at the same time. Your instructions will be completed when you have handed over the Memorandum, to which nothing is to be added orally.

The Memorandum will arrive by special courier.<sup>2</sup> The time of arrival will be given later.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 276.

<sup>2</sup> Two copies of the Memorandum were sent to Warsaw with a cover note of even date (not printed, 908/293965).

## No. 275

F9/297

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
TOP SECRET  
No. 172 of April 27TOKYO, April 27, 1939—1:54 p.m.  
Received April 27—8:35 a.m.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 136 of April 26.<sup>1</sup>

I learn from an absolutely reliable source:

As a result of a Cabinet decision, instructions were sent to Ambassador Oshima on the evening of April 26 that Japan agrees to a military alliance with Germany and Italy without limiting its scope to Russia. The Japanese Government couple this assent with the request that the outbreak of a war should be delayed as long as possible, since for military and economic reasons Japan is at present incapable of affording effective aid.

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 270.

## No. 276

52/34684-92

*Note from the German Government to the Polish Government*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, April 27, 1939.

MEMORANDUM<sup>2</sup>

The German Government have learnt, through the declarations publicly issued by the Polish and British Governments, of the progress and ultimate objectives of the negotiations recently conducted between Poland and Great Britain. According to these declarations<sup>3</sup> there has been concluded between the Polish Government and the British Government a temporary understanding, to be replaced shortly by a permanent agreement which will ensure Poland and Great Britain mutual assistance in the event of the independence of one or other of the two States being directly or indirectly threatened.

The German Government consider themselves obliged to communicate the following to the Polish Government:—

When in 1933 the National Socialist Government set about the task of reshaping German foreign policy, their first objective, after Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations, was to place German-Polish relations on a new basis. The Führer of the German Reich and the late Marshal Pilsudski concurred in the decision to break with the political methods of the past and to enter, as regards the settlement of all questions affecting the relations of both countries, on the path of direct friendly understanding between the two States. By means of the unconditional renunciation of any use of force against each other, a guarantee of peace was to be created, in order to assist the two Governments in the difficult task of solving all political, economic and cultural problems by means of a just and equitable adjustment of mutual interests.

These principles, laid down by treaty in binding form, in the German-Polish Peace Declaration of January 26, 1934,<sup>4</sup> were destined to, and have in fact succeeded in introducing an entirely new phase in the development of German-Polish relations. That these principles have in practice proved to be of advantage to both nations is shown by the political history of the last five years. As recently as January 26 of this year, on the fifth anniversary of the signature of the Declaration, both sides publicly confirmed this fact, while emphasizing that they

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 91 of Apr. 28 (not printed, 52/34697), Krümmer, Counsellor of Embassy in Warsaw, reported that he handed the memorandum to Count Szembek at 11:50 a.m. on Apr. 28.

<sup>2</sup> This document is also printed, in translation, in the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 14, and the *Polish White Book*, No. 76; see footnotes 8 and 9 below.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., in the Anglo-Polish communiqué of Apr. 6; see document No. 169, footnote 5.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 101, footnote 5.

were united in their determination to remain faithful in future also to the principles established in 1934.<sup>5</sup>

The agreement, which has now been concluded by the Polish Government with the British Government, is in such obvious contradiction to these solemn declarations of a few months ago that the German Government can take note only with surprise and displeasure of such a sudden and radical change in Polish policy.

Whatever may be its final formulation, the new Polish-British agreement is intended by both parties as a regular pact of alliance, and moreover a pact of alliance which, from its generally known antecedents and the present state of political relations, is directed exclusively against Germany. From the obligation now assumed by the Polish Government it appears that, in the event of a possible German-British conflict, Poland intends to intervene with an attack on Germany in certain circumstances, even should this conflict not affect Poland and her interests. This is a direct and flagrant violation of the renunciation of all use of force contained in the 1934 Declaration. The contradiction between the German-Polish Declaration and the Polish-British Agreement is, however, even more far-reaching in its importance than that. The 1934 Declaration was to constitute a basis for the settlement, under the aegis of the agreed guarantee of peace, of all questions arising between the two countries, independently of international complications and combinations, by means of direct discussion between Berlin and Warsaw, to the exclusion of external influences. Naturally, such a basis presupposes the mutual confidence of both parties and the loyalty of the political intentions of one party with regard to the other. The Polish Government, however, by the decision they have now taken to accede to an alliance directed against Germany, have let it be understood that they prefer a promise of aid from a third Power to the direct guarantee of peace assured them by the German Government. Likewise the German Government are obliged to conclude that the Polish Government at present no longer attach any importance to seeking a solution of German-Polish problems by means of direct friendly discussions with the German Government. The Polish Government have thus abandoned the path agreed upon in 1934 for the shaping of German-Polish relations.

The Polish Government cannot appeal to the fact that the 1934 Declaration was not to affect the obligations previously accepted by Poland and Germany in relation to third parties, and that alongside this Declaration the agreements of alliance between Poland and France retained their validity. The Polish-French Alliance<sup>6</sup> had already become a fact in 1934 when Poland and Germany proceeded to reorganize

<sup>5</sup> In an official communiqué issued after Ribbentrop's visit to Warsaw (see vol. v of this Series, document No. 126); for the text, see the *Polish White Book*, No. 54.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 188, footnote 2.



their relations. The German Government were able to accept this fact, since they could expect that the possible dangers of a Polish-French Alliance, which had originated in a period of the most acute German-Polish differences, would of their own accord increasingly diminish in significance with the establishment of friendly relations between Germany and Poland. Poland's entry into relations of alliance with Great Britain, which has now been effected five years after the Declaration of 1934 was agreed upon, can therefore in no way be compared politically with the fact of the Polish-French Alliance remaining in force. By this new alliance the Polish Government have subordinated themselves to a policy inaugurated from another quarter, and which aims at the encirclement of Germany.

The German Government, for their part, have not given the least cause for such a change in Polish policy. Whenever opportunity offered, they have furnished the Polish Government, both publicly and in confidential conversations, with the most binding assurances that the friendly development of German-Polish relations is a fundamental aim for their foreign policy, and that, in their political decisions, they will always respect Poland's proper interests. Thus, the action taken by Germany in March of this year with a view to the pacification of Central Europe did not, in the opinion of the Government of the Reich, disturb Polish interests in any way. This action led to the creation of a common Polish-Hungarian frontier, which had constantly been described on Poland's side as an important political objective. Moreover, the German Government have given unequivocal expression to their readiness to meet the Polish Government in friendly discussion should the latter perhaps hold the view that new problems had arisen for them out of the re-arrangement of Central Europe.

In an equally friendly spirit the German Government have tried to settle the sole question still outstanding between Germany and Poland, namely, that of Danzig. The fact that this question called for a re-arrangement has been emphasized year in year out on the German side, and has not been contested on the Polish side. For a long time past the German Government have repeatedly endeavoured to convince the Polish Government that a solution was certainly possible which would be equitable to the interests of both parties and that the removal of this last obstacle would open up a path for political collaboration between Germany and Poland with the most favourable prospects. In this connection the German Government did not confine themselves to allusions of a general nature, but in March of this year proposed to the Polish Government,<sup>7</sup> in friendly form, a settlement of this question on the following basis:—The return of Danzig to the Reich. Extra-territorial rail and motor-road communication between East Prussia

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 61.

and the Reich. In exchange, the recognition by the Reich of the whole Polish Corridor and the whole of Poland's western frontier; the conclusion of a non-aggression pact for twenty-five years; the maintenance of Poland's economic interests in Danzig and a generous settlement of the remaining economic and communications problems arising for Poland out of the union of Danzig with the Reich.<sup>8</sup>

No one, familiar with conditions in Danzig and the Corridor and the problems connected therewith can deny, in judging the matter objectively, that this proposal constitutes the very minimum which must be demanded from the point of view of indispensable German interests,<sup>9</sup> and that it takes into consideration all Poland's essential interests. The Polish Government, however, returned a reply<sup>10</sup> which, although couched in the form of counter proposals, in fact showed an entire lack of comprehension for the German point of view and was equivalent to a flat rejection of the German proposals. That the Polish Government themselves did not consider their reply suitable for the initiation of a friendly understanding they proved by proceeding at the same time, in a manner as unexpected as it was drastic, to effect a partial mobilization of the Polish army on a large scale. By these entirely unjustified measures, the Polish Government demonstrated in advance the meaning and object of the negotiations which they immediately afterwards entered upon with the British Government.

The German Government have not considered it necessary to reply to the partial Polish mobilization by military counter measures. Nevertheless, they cannot simply pass over in silence the other decisions recently taken by the Polish Government. On the contrary they are compelled, to their own regret, to declare as follows:—

(1) The Polish Government have not availed themselves of the opportunity offered them by the German Government for a just settlement of the Danzig question, for the final safeguarding of Poland's frontiers with the Reich, and thereby for a permanent strengthening of the good neighbourly relations between the two countries. Indeed, the Polish Government have rejected the German proposals made with this end in view.

(2) At the same time the Polish Government have, with regard to another State, entered into political obligations which are not compatible either with the spirit or letter of the German-Polish Declaration of January 26, 1934. Thereby the Polish Government have arbitrarily and unilaterally rendered this declaration null and void.

<sup>8</sup> The following sentence, reproduced in the *Polish White Book*, No. 76 and in the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 14, does not appear in the text here printed: "At the same time, the German Government expressed their readiness to respect Polish interests in ensuring the independence of Slovakia."

<sup>9</sup> The remainder of this sentence does not appear in the English edition of the *Polish White Book*, No. 76, nor in the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 14. It does, however, appear in the French edition of the *Polish White Book*.

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 101.

In spite of this necessary statement of fact, the Government of the Reich do not intend to alter their fundamental attitude towards the question of the future shaping of German-Polish relations. Should the Polish Government attach importance to a new settlement of these relations by means of a treaty, the German Government are ready to do this, but on one condition, namely that such a settlement must consist of a clear obligation, binding on both parties.

## No. 277

1637/390063-71

*Note from the German Government to the British Government*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, April 27, 1939.

Pol. I 163.

## MEMORANDUM

When in the year 1935 the German Government made the British Government the offer to adjust the strength of the German fleet to a fixed ratio of the strength of the naval forces of the British Empire by a treaty, they did so on the basis of the firm conviction that for all time the recurrence of a war-like conflict between Germany and Great Britain was excluded. In voluntarily recognizing the priority of British interests at sea through their offer of a ratio of 100:35 they believed that, in their decision to do so, which was probably unique in the history of the Great Powers, they were taking a step which would lead to the establishment of friendly relations between the two nations for all time. This step taken by the German Government was naturally based on the presumption that the British Government were equally determined to adopt a political attitude which would assure a friendly development of German-British relations.

On this basis and on these presumptions the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of the 18th June, 1935,<sup>2</sup> was brought about. This was unanimously expressed by both parties on the conclusion of the Agreement. Likewise, as recently as last autumn, after the Munich Conference, the German Chancellor and the British Prime Minister solemnly confirmed, in the Declaration<sup>3</sup> which they signed, that they regarded the agreement as symbolic of the desire of both peoples never to go to war with one another again.

The German Government have always adhered to this desire and are still inspired by it today. They are conscious of having acted

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 307.

<sup>2</sup> For the text see British White Paper, Treaty Series No. 22 (1935), Cmd. 4953: *Exchange of Notes between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the German Government regarding the Limitation of Naval Armaments*, London, June 18, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 676.

accordingly in their policy and of having in no case encroached upon the sphere of British interests or of having in any way prejudiced such interests. On the other hand they must, to their regret, note that the British Government of late are departing more and more from pursuit of a corresponding policy toward Germany. As is clearly shown by the political decisions made known by the British Government in the last few weeks, as well as by the anti-German attitude which they have inspired in the English press, the British Government are now guided by the view that, whatever the part of Europe in which Germany might be involved in a war-like conflict, England must always take sides against Germany, even in a case where English interests are not in any way affected by such a conflict. The British Government thus no longer regard war by Britain against Germany as impossible, but, on the contrary, as a major concern of British foreign policy.

By this encirclement policy, the British Government have unilaterally deprived the Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, of its foundation and have thus rendered ineffective both this Agreement as well as the "Declaration", agreed upon as supplement thereto, of July 17, 1937.<sup>4</sup>

The same applies to Part III of the German-British Naval Agreement of July 17, 1937, which lays down the obligation of a mutual German-British exchange of information. The performance of this obligation naturally rests on the presumption that relations of trust and confidence exist between both partners. Since the German Government, to their regret, can no longer regard these relations as obtaining, they must also regard the provisions of Part III, referred to above, as having lapsed.

The qualitative provisions of the German-British Agreement of July 17, 1937, remain unaffected by these conclusions which the German Government have been compelled, against their will, to draw. The German Government will continue to abide by these provisions in future and thereby make their contribution to avoiding a general and unrestricted naval armament race amongst the nations.

Moreover, should the British Government desire again to enter into negotiations with Germany over the problems here arising, the German Government are gladly prepared to do so. They would welcome it, should it then prove possible to reach a clear and categorical understanding on a sure basis.

<sup>4</sup> For the text see British White Paper, Treaty Series No. 2 (1938), Cmd. 5637: *Agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the German Government providing for the Limitation of Naval Armament and the Exchange of Information concerning Naval Construction (With Declaration, Protocol of Signature and Exchange of Notes)*, London, July 17, 1937.

## No. 278

2081/534297-98

*Counsellor of Embassy Kordt to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

LONDON, April 27, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Enclosed you will find a memorandum on a *démarche* made by the British Government to Poland. I should be grateful if you would treat the contents of the memorandum as secret, so as not to compromise my source. The report seems to me to agree in essentials with our Warsaw Embassy's report of April 4, Pol. V 3006.<sup>1</sup>

With kind regards,

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

TH. KORDT

[Enclosure]

## MEMORANDUM

SECRET

I have learned from a very secret source that on April 19 the British Government sent a note to the Polish Government with approximately the following contents:—

Certain signs indicated that Germany considered she had grounds for complaint regarding the treatment of German minorities in Poland. These complaints applied particularly to the Germans in Eastern Upper Silesia, but also to the minorities in the remainder of Western Poland. The British Government did not wish to attach undue importance to these reports, but considered themselves obliged to inform the Polish Government that the British guarantee of Poland did not include *carte blanche* for ill-treatment of German minorities. The British Government therefore hoped that the Polish Government would do what they could to ensure satisfactory treatment of the German minorities in Poland.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 154. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 237.

## No. 279

2162/470228-24

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, April 27, 1939.

State Secretary Neumann<sup>2</sup> told me the following about yesterday's conversation between Field Marshal Göring and the Yugoslav Foreign Minister.

The conversation took place in private and Field Marshal Göring had told him afterwards that in the course of the long and friendly talk the question of deliveries of war material had been discussed among other things. The Field Marshal had confirmed to the Foreign Minister that we were prepared in principle to grant a credit. The amount of this credit depended on the extent to which we could comply with the requests for deliveries contained in the Yugoslav lists, a matter which must first be examined. A fixed sum for the total amount of the credit had not been promised by the Field Marshal. But from the course of the conversations which the Field Marshal had had a few months ago with M. Cincar-Marković,<sup>3</sup> it could be assumed that M. Cincar-Marković was counting on a total of 200 million RM, if sufficient German goods were available for delivery.

According to Herr Neumann's information it is quite possible to continue the negotiations slowly and to make their further course, as well as the final amount of the credit, dependent on the political attitude of Yugoslavia.

In conclusion, Herr Neumann said that he thought it was the Field Marshal's intention to telephone the Reich Foreign Minister direct.

CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "To be submitted to the Foreign Minister through the State Secretary."

<sup>2</sup> State Secretary for the Four Year Plan.

<sup>3</sup> No record has been found.

## No. 280

2422/511999

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, April 28, 1939.

## DIRECTIVE

1) When the text of the Führer's speech is handed over to the United States Chargé d'Affaires at noon today the following statement is to be made: The Führer's speech is hereby delivered to the United States

Chargé d'Affaires. It represents the Führer's reply to President Roosevelt's telegram to the Führer of April 15, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

No further remarks are to be added.<sup>2</sup>

2) After the completion of this *démarche* a telegram is to be sent to Washington to Herr Thomsen, in which he will be informed accordingly.<sup>3</sup>

Herewith to Under State Secretary Woermann for further action, please.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 200.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "At 11:50 I handed Patterson, First Secretary of the United States Embassy, a German and an English version and made the statement mentioned above. Heimbürg 28/4."

<sup>3</sup> The information was sent in telegram No. 131 of Apr. 28 (not printed, 2422/511998). In telegram No. 130 of the same day (not printed, B21/B005844) Weizsäcker instructed Thomsen to give the Führer's speech the widest publicity in the United States. Extra funds would be provided if those available proved insufficient.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On April 28, Hitler made a speech to the Reichstag in which he announced that he considered the Anglo-German Naval Agreement and the German-Polish Peace Declaration as no longer binding, and criticized President Roosevelt's peace appeal (document No. 200). Relevant extracts from this speech are printed in English translation in Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 1605-1656.]

## No. 281

1625/388634-36

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Turkey*

Telegram

No. 95

BERLIN, April 28, 1939—4:30 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 1381.

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

In addition to the general picture of Turkey's fundamental attitude, on which the Embassy was informed in telegram No. 93,<sup>1</sup> reports received here give the following further details concerning the Turco-British and Turco-Soviet Russian negotiations:—

Whilst the reply by the Turkish Government to the first British circular enquiry of March 18 concerning the alleged imminent attack on Rumania gave no grounds for objections on our part (cf. despatch of April 5, Pol. II 1025 II),<sup>2</sup> it seems that, in conjunction with the British offer of a guarantee to Rumania, Turkey has since allowed herself

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 259, which was telegram No. 93 to Ankara.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of document No. 160 was forwarded to Ankara under this date and file number for strictly confidential information (1625/388438).

to be more markedly affected by the repercussions of the British diplomatic activities in South East Europe. According to your telegram No. 97,<sup>3</sup> the Turkish Foreign Minister had already during his Easter meeting with Gafencu discussed in detail the question of the passage of foreign warships through the Dardanelles to aid Rumania. Although Saracoğlu asserted that he did not go beyond the terms of the Montreux Convention<sup>4</sup> in this, that does not exclude the possibility that some prospect of such passage had been held out in the event of Turkey entering the war. In connection with the guarantees to Greece and Rumania, the British Government then made Turkey a new proposal to which the Turkish Government made a reply in the middle of April which was certainly not in the nature of a refusal.<sup>5</sup> Obviously the aim of Turkish tactics is to maintain Turkey's neutrality in principle as long as Germany or Italy do not attack in the Balkans or the Eastern Mediterranean, and yet to make arrangements in case she considers she has reason to abandon her neutrality and side with Britain. Of course such tactics make her alleged neutrality a mere fiction. Alongside these conversations with Britain, in which Turkey is evidently pressing particularly for an Anglo-Soviet Russian agreement, Turkey is also attempting to come to a settlement with France over the Sanjak<sup>6</sup> and to prevail upon the Balkan countries to present a solid front against the advancing influence of the Axis Powers.

The Turco-Soviet Russian discussions, which have been going on in Moscow since the beginning of April concerning Russian aid to Turkey in case of war,<sup>7</sup> have been considerably intensified owing to the progress of the Anglo-Turkish negotiations. [The Turks are evidently trying to get advantageous conditions, especially for Russian deliveries, and at the same time to enlist Russian help in their efforts to restore good relations between Bulgaria and Rumania.]<sup>8</sup>

Please send report by telegram as soon as you have found out anything about these matters and Potemkin's visit.<sup>9</sup>

RIBBENTROP

<sup>3</sup> In this telegram of Apr. 12 (not printed, 7798/E566118) Kroll reported what Saracoğlu had said about his meeting with Gafencu on Apr. 9.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 227 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 259.

<sup>6</sup> See documents Nos. 3, 59 and 72.

<sup>7</sup> See also document No. 257, footnotes 4 and 5.

<sup>8</sup> The passage in square brackets was deleted in the draft before despatch.

<sup>9</sup> In telegram No. 197 of Apr. 24 (not printed, 1625/388623) Stelzer reported from Bucharest that Cretzianu had informed him that Potemkin would be passing through Bucharest on the following day on his way to Turkey and would merely be greeted at the station by an official of the Protocol Department. The Rumanian Government had also had a statement made in London to the effect that Rumania would take no part in any political combination with the Soviet Union. In telegram No. 133 of Apr. 26 (not printed, 2767/535864) Kroll reported from Ankara that Numan had told him that Potemkin's visit was due to the initiative of Soviet Russia and was obviously taking place at the suggestion of Britain. The purpose of the visit was an exchange of views on the state of Anglo-Russian and Anglo-Turkish conversations; it was the Turkish impression that Moscow was not finally committed.



## No. 282

1637/390072-73

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, April 28, 1939.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor v.d. Heyden-Rynsch. Pol. I 163.

The denunciation of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement announced in the Führer's speech of today<sup>2</sup> applies only to the so-called "quantitative" agreement of June 18, 1935, together with its supplementary Declaration of July 17, 1937, on the limitation of Germany's naval strength to 35 per cent of the naval strength of the British Empire, and (2) only to Part III, "Exchange of information on naval construction", of the "qualitative" Anglo-German Naval Agreement of July 17, 1937. The qualitative provisions of the Agreement of 1937 thus remain unaffected. The British Government were notified of the denunciation at noon on the 28th through the London Embassy in a Memorandum,<sup>3</sup> which is published in the German press. The text will follow in a despatch.

In conversations, please emphasize specially that the German Government still wish to avoid a general and unrestricted naval armament race amongst the nations, and will therefore continue to abide by the qualitative provisions of the Agreement of July 17, 1937.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the German Missions at Paris, Rome, Tokyo, Washington, Moscow, Warsaw, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 277.

## No. 283

7801, E566159-61

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WASHINGTON, April 28, 1939—10:12 p.m.

No. 144 of April 28

Received April 29—7:10 a.m.

Pol. IX 908.

The tensely-awaited speech of the Führer was broadcast from all American stations this morning. This evening's papers publish the speech, partly by giving extracts and, where it contains the answer to Roosevelt's appeal,<sup>1</sup> by quoting the whole text. It is not yet possible to obtain a complete or uniform picture of the reaction to the speech.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 200.

It is already certain that the Führer's answer to Roosevelt's appeal has made a great impression.

In a number of the comments made so far, it is concluded that the speech leaves the door open for further negotiations. It is inferred, however, from the denunciation of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement and the German-Polish Agreement that the Führer is deeply embittered over encirclement, and no doubts are entertained as to his determination to continue his course of bringing about a new order in the German territories in the east, and of reincorporating Danzig and the Corridor in Germany.

Where members of Congress have so far given their views, their attitude to the Führer's speech varies according to whether they adhere to the President's active policy or to the policy of isolation. A very adverse attitude is taken by Speaker Bankhead, who takes the unilateral denunciation of the Anglo-German and German-Polish Agreements to mean that Hitler does not respect the sanctity of treaties, and that similar violation of other existing treaties must be expected in the future. He considers that, notwithstanding Hitler's general desire for the maintenance of peace in Europe and the world, the speech was filled with veiled threats of fresh attacks, and offered all the less certainty of a stable peace.

The only statement from Government circles is that of Press Chief McDermott,<sup>2</sup> who, obviously on instructions from Sumner Welles, ... (group mutilated) has communicated confidentially that the American Government are disappointed at Hitler's non-acceptance of the Roosevelt proposals, the spirit of these proposals apparently not being recognized in Berlin. The appeal had been meant absolutely sincerely. The situation today resembled that of August 1914. The World War broke out then because no peace conference was held before its outbreak. Repeated assurances that Hitler did not want to attack anybody were not sufficient in the opinion of the American Government. In reality Hitler had not given up the objectives set forth in *Mein Kampf*.

Grave crises could continue to recur over colonial questions, Danzig, and other plans. But the American Government wanted an end at last to international tension. This would have come about if the Führer had agreed to Roosevelt's proposals for a conference on disarmament and economic matters. According to McDermott, the American Government had been willing to meet Germany as far as possible in the economic sphere. The door to such negotiations had apparently been shut for ever by Hitler's speech, and therefore, quite apart from the denunciation of the Anglo-German and German-Polish Agreements, the general situation had worsened.

<sup>2</sup> Chief of the Current Information Division, Department of State, since 1927.

Similar statements regarding the alleged motives of the Roosevelt appeal were made to a member of the Embassy yesterday by Livesey, Economic Adviser to the State Department. According to these, the plan for the so-called peace appeal had risen suddenly owing to reports from the American Ambassadors in Paris and London<sup>3</sup> on the immediate danger of war. Roosevelt wanted to avoid Edward Grey's<sup>4</sup> mistake in August 1914 by proposing a conference, which would at least delay the swiftly worsening crisis.

A further telegram follows.

THOMSEN

<sup>3</sup> William C. Bullitt and Joseph P. Kennedy.

<sup>4</sup> Sir Edward Grey, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1905-1916.

## No. 284

2886/565380-81

### *The State Secretary to the Legations in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, April 28, 1939—11:20 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. VI 1115 Ang. I.

After certain Baltic States (for your information: Estonia, Latvia) had on several occasions approached us with a view to reaching agreement on the stabilization of mutual political relations by way of non-aggression treaties, the Foreign Minister today received the Ministers of Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Latvia and Finland<sup>1</sup> separately (the Estonian Minister will call tomorrow)<sup>2</sup> and told them, with reference to the Führer's speech,<sup>3</sup> that we were in principle ready to conclude non-aggression treaties on the basis of full reciprocity. The Ministers were requested to ask their Governments whether they for their part desired the conclusion of such treaties in accordance with the Führer's declaration: if so, a proposal drawn up in precise terms would shortly be handed to the Ministers here.

For your information:

As regards Lithuania, a reciprocal renunciation of the use of force has already found expression in the agreement about the reintegration of the Memel territory.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A memorandum by Weizsäcker, St.S. No. 377 of Apr. 28 (not printed, 2886/565383), states that Ribbentrop told the Swedish Minister that, in the event of such a pact, an improvement in the tone of the Swedish press would be expected. No other record of these conversations has been found.

<sup>2</sup> For the conversation with the Estonian Minister, see document No. 294.

<sup>3</sup> The reference appears to be to Hitler's statement, in his speech of Apr. 28, that "all States bordering on Germany have received much more binding assurances and, above all, more binding proposals [*viel bindigere Vorschläge*] than Mr. Roosevelt asks from me in his curious telegram." Cf. Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 1647.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 405 and footnote 2 thereto.

Addition for 3 [Copenhagen] only:<sup>5</sup>

For your personal information only:

The offer of a non-aggression pact is naturally not to be regarded as a renunciation of North Schleswig. It only rules out the use of force as a means of rectifying frontiers. This would be suitably expressed here if need be during the negotiations on the conclusion of such an agreement.<sup>6</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>5</sup> This addition was deleted in the draft before despatch.

<sup>6</sup> On the same day a slightly different version of this telegram was addressed to the Legations at Tallinn (No. 48) and Riga (No. 67) (not printed, 115/117573) and Kovno (not printed, 115/117574), the latter with the following addition: "For your personal information I would point out that in certain circumstances we would not refuse to make the German-Lithuanian Agreement accord with the agreements possibly to be concluded with other States, in particular Estonia and Latvia."

## No. 285

F9/0296

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, April 28, 1939—6:50 p.m.

TOP SECRET

No. 139

Only for the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 172 of April 27.<sup>1</sup>

Doubts exist here whether the Japanese Government's reservation about interpreting the treaty to the Western Powers as not being directed against them, has definitely been dropped. (See penultimate paragraph of our telegram No. 136 of April 26.<sup>2</sup>)

I should be grateful if you could possibly, unobtrusively, ascertain the position from informed quarters.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 275.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 270.

## No. 286

1625/388654-57

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 212.

BERLIN, April 28, 1939.

Sent April 29—2:30 p.m.

zu Pol. II 1387<sup>1</sup> Ang. I.<sup>2</sup>

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

With reference to my telegram No. 197.<sup>3</sup>Ambassador von Papen<sup>4</sup> reports by telegram from Ankara on April 27:<sup>1</sup>

I arrived this morning and was immediately received by the Foreign Minister<sup>5</sup> for a detailed discussion.<sup>6</sup> In view of the grave decisions by Turkey I stated with brutal frankness the position of the Axis Powers and their desire to settle all problems peacefully, but also their determination to oppose the policy of encirclement with all the means at their disposal. In every respect a neutral Turkey was for us the only acceptable policy, and we were therefore prepared to contribute to an increase of her military strength in order to assure her neutrality. Any deviation from this course would have grave consequences.

The Foreign Minister warmly welcomed my appointment and expressed the greatest admiration for the Führer's constructive work. Until the occupation of Albania, Turkey had hoped that the policy of negative neutrality hitherto pursued would see her through. She had weighed up this event from a purely strategic point of view. She had no feelings of friendship for the Albanians, neither had she a religious interest in them. Turkey had also refused the King the right of asylum, and had not acceded to the British request regarding the declaration of guarantee to Greece.<sup>7</sup> But the Foreign Minister's remarks showed a very deep distrust of Italy's Mediterranean plans. When I asked him to tell me candidly Turkey's views, the Foreign Minister assured me that her intentions towards Germany were most friendly. No discussions of any kind were being conducted with Britain or Russia on any proposals formulated in writing. It was a question of an exchange of views with these countries in order to discover what would be likely to happen if Italy or Germany or both

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 135 from Ankara of Apr. 27 (not printed, 1625/388652-53).

<sup>2</sup> Ang. II is document No. 289.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 259, which was telegram No. 197 to Rome.

<sup>4</sup> Papen was appointed Ambassador to Turkey on Apr. 18, 1939.

<sup>5</sup> Sükrü Saracoğlu.

<sup>6</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 302.

<sup>7</sup> See also *ibid.*, Nos. 128 and 149.

took armed action against the Balkan allies or in the Mediterranean. When asked whether a statement could be expected on the result of these deliberations, he said that it was too early to give an answer to that. I asked him most urgently to refrain from making any statement which might be exploited by the other side as an abandonment of neutrality. It was made clear that the key to all further decisions by Turkey was the future attitude of Italy, and, having attempted without success to disperse these fears, I am convinced that the situation here can only be restored by an unequivocal statement from Mussolini.

Thus far the telegram from Ankara.<sup>8</sup>

As to what it says, the first thing to notice is that it fully confirms the impression formed here about Turkey's attitude. When the Turkish Foreign Minister says that no discussions of any kind are being conducted with Britain and Russia on any proposals formulated in writing, he thereby himself admits that proposals not formulated in writing are being discussed. His statement that Turkey did not accede to the British request for a declaration of guarantee to Greece must be corrected to the effect that, to our knowledge, the Turkish Ambassador in London proposed that Britain, France, and Turkey should give a joint guarantee to Greece<sup>9</sup> in reply to Italy's action in Albania, a proposal which the British Government, however, did not pursue. The general picture that emerges is that, though the Turks boast outwardly, and especially to us, of their neutral attitude, they are at the same time determined in certain circumstances immediately to abandon this neutrality and go over to Britain and, with this possibility in mind, they are already conducting detailed discussions with other Governments, in particular with Britain. Of course this reduces Turkey's alleged neutrality to pure fiction.

It is not believed here that, as the Ambassador in Ankara suggests, a statement by Mussolini would be sufficient to induce the Turks to abandon the course they are pursuing. Turkey's distrust of Italy's intentions in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean is obviously too great for that. However, will you please inform Count Ciano of

<sup>8</sup> The concluding passage from Papen's telegram, which is not quoted above, reads as follows: "An analogous declaration to that made to Greece is not to be considered, and would injure Turkey's *amour propre*. I would therefore propose an official conversation between the Duce and the Turkish Ambassador in Rome, as the Ambassador here is on leave and has little influence. Furthermore I would ask you whether it could not insistently be pressed home in the Führer's speech that our interest in the Balkans is merely economic and that we are convinced of the possibility of a peaceful solution of all territorial questions that may exist between the Balkan States. As Potemkin arrives tomorrow, haste is necessary. I believe that my words were not without effect."

<sup>9</sup> In telegram No. 118 of Apr. 13 (2771/536882) Th. Kordt had reported from London: "I learn in confidence from a very good source that the Turkish Ambassador here, Rüstü Aras, has proposed to Lord Halifax that Turkey, Great Britain and Italy should simultaneously and independently of each other make declarations guaranteeing the territorial integrity of Greece. Lord Halifax is said to have responded to this with interest and to have promised to consider it."

the substance of Ambassador von Papen's report, and also communicate to him in strict confidence the contents of our telegram No. 197. We think that this information will be of great interest to the Italian Government. Please report by telegram on Count Ciano's reaction to your communications.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 287

2422/512000

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 148 of April 29

WASHINGTON, April 29, 1939—5:48 p.m.

Received April 30—3:15 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 144 of April 28.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday's mixed reaction to the Führer's speech, caused by first impressions of the text before it had been commented on, has given way to a uniformly pessimistic and spiteful attitude in today's press. In harmony with the first reaction in State Department circles, which I reported, the newspapers uniformly emphasize that the Führer's speech has brought no relaxation in the crisis atmosphere of the last few weeks, but has only postponed the war which is considered inevitable.

Attention is focused today on the problems designated by the Führer as still unsolved, in particular the relations between Germany and Poland, the reincorporation of Danzig being described as imminent. There is general agreement that a unilateral solution by force of matters outstanding between Germany and Poland would inevitably lead to world war. In this sense, the speech is considered to be a breathing-space created by the Führer so that he can gauge relative strengths. Isolated press comments, as for instance today's leading article by Walter Lippmann, recognize the justice of Germany's claim to a solution of the questions of Danzig and the Corridor.

These questions have caused the denunciation of the Naval Agreement, German colonial aims, and, surprisingly enough, the Führer's reply to Roosevelt's so-called peace appeal in particular, to recede right into the background in the press.

The American Government have not yet expressed any views, and, according to information received, are engaged in a thorough examination of the contents of the speech. Opinion in Congress is divided. Opposition members have expressed, in confidential conversations, their unalloyed satisfaction at Roosevelt's deserved rebuff.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 283.

## No. 288

1593/384257

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 138 of April 29

ANKARA, April 29, 1939—5:50 p.m.

Received April 29—9:00 p.m.

Pol. VII 702.

The President has received me already today for the purpose of presenting my credentials. After the ceremony, he took me aside and we had an hour's conversation, on which I am reporting fully in a despatch.<sup>1</sup> Our conversation, as between old soldiers, was extremely cordial and frank. The Führer's speech had left an impression of conscious strength and a determined will for peace. I tried to dispel the President's anxiety about the Polish question—the non-settlement of which, he thought, might lead to world war—and also in particular his doubts regarding Italian aspirations in the Mediterranean. I assured him that, in our conversations with Yugoslavia, we had by no means been prompted by the intention to break up the Balkan Pact. I said that on the contrary peaceful conditions in the Balkans were for us a prerequisite for economic collaboration. The conversation turned for a long time on the question of the Straits. The President admitted that Turkey was conducting discussions with a view to adopting a common policy in the event of war in the Mediterranean. I repeated that, even in that event, we expected from Turkey the strictest neutrality, that is, that she close the Straits to everyone. We then discussed frankly all possible cases of conflict, and I think I was successful to a great degree in bringing Turkey's decisions on the subject into line with our views on strict neutrality. In any case the President declared that he did not want to give Germany any grounds for doubting his friendly attitude. I again conveyed a most urgent warning against making any statement which might give our opponents the chance to assert that Turkey had associated herself with the Western Powers, and I believe that this request will be complied with. My general impression is that my mission has not come too late to restore the situation, and that the President entertains the very best intentions towards Germany. For the sake of its effect on Turkey please arrange for DNB to publish a report of my reception.<sup>2</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1593/384258-65).

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Schlobies' handwriting: "Published in DNB No. 686".



## No. 289

1625/388658-60

*Circular of the Director of the Political Department*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, April 29, 1939—7:00 p.m.  
zu Pol. II 1387<sup>2</sup> Ang. II.<sup>3</sup>

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

For your information only.

As Ambassador von Papen reported by telegram,<sup>2</sup> the first conversation which he had with the Turkish Foreign Minister revealed that the Turks profoundly distrust Italy's Mediterranean plans. Whereas, said Saracoğlu, up to the occupation of Albania Turkey had hoped to get along with the negative neutrality she had maintained up to now, he explained, with reference to the conversations now in progress with Britain and Russia, that it was a question of sounding these Powers in order to ascertain what would happen if Italy or Germany or both should resort to arms against the Balkan allies or in the Mediterranean. In reply to the question whether a declaration was to be expected on the results of these deliberations, the Foreign Minister said that it was still too early to answer this. Whereupon the Ambassador pressed strongly that Turkey should refrain from any declaration, which could only be exploited by the other side as an abandonment of her neutrality.

Saracoğlu's remarks fully confirmed the picture of the Turkish attitude given in our preceding telegram.<sup>4</sup> As to details, we also know, this in strict confidence, that in the middle of April the British Ambassador in Ankara formally offered the Turkish Government a guarantee of mutual assistance against Italy and subsequently extended this proposal to apply against Germany as well. In form the proposal was identical with the Anglo-Polish Declaration of Mutual Assistance. The Turkish Government have not expressly rejected this proposal, but they obviously wish their agreement with Britain to take the form of an arrangement for the event that the Axis Powers resort to the offensive in the Mediterranean and also in the Balkans, and thereby cause Turkey to relinquish her neutrality.

Otherwise Turkey is ready to accept Britain's assistance for Turkish defensive preparations, but attaches importance to Anglo-Soviet Russian cooperation being assured, and to the differences between

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Embassies at London, Paris and Moscow.<sup>2</sup> Telegram No. 135 from Ankara of Apr. 27 (not printed, 1625/388652-53).<sup>3</sup> Angabe I is document No. 286.<sup>4</sup> Document No. 259.

Bulgaria and Rumania being bridged. It is clear that, in the circumstances, Turkish neutrality is but a fiction.

*London only.*

Noteworthy is also that Saracoğlu, in conversation with our Ambassador, mentioned that Turkey had not acceded to the British request for a declaration of guarantee to Greece. This version is obviously an attempt to distort the facts reported in your telegram No. 118.<sup>5</sup>

*Paris only.*

It follows accordingly that the remarks made by the Turkish Ambassador in Paris and reported in your telegram No. 243,<sup>6</sup> do not represent the Turkish attitude.

WOERMANN

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 286, footnote 9.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (7891/E571201-02). This telegram described the Ambassador as saying that Turkey was pursuing a policy of strict neutrality.

## No. 290

621/250770-71

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 248 of April 29

PARIS, April 29, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received April 29—11:45 p.m.

I. As is apparent from numerous conversations, the Führer's speech has undoubtedly had a reassuring effect on the French population. Though pessimistic comments are not lacking, it is fairly generally recognized that the tone of the speech was moderate, serious and dignified, and that the German demands are by no means incapable of being met. The statements concerning France and Alsace-Lorraine are much emphasized. The denunciation of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement and the irony at Roosevelt's expense are at times even commented on with a certain amount of malicious pleasure. Anxiety is expressed only on account of relations between Germany and Poland, concerning which there appears to be understanding for the return of Danzig to the Reich, whereas in the question of the Corridor the attitude is more in favour of Poland. The reassuring effect of the speech has begun to show results in the business world, in spite of the adverse attitude of the greater part of the press.

II. Press comments agree largely with the statements of the semi-official Havas special edition, transmitted *en clair* in telegram No. 245.<sup>2</sup> Though they recognize the moderate tone and the fact that the door

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (57/38988-90).

for negotiations has not been closed, they are in general couched in a tone of unconstructive and distrustful criticism. The basic argument is that the speech means no worsening of the situation but neither does it mean an easing of the tension. It shows rather that the Führer is uncertain at present as to what course to pursue. Roosevelt's attitude, it is held, as well as the rearmament and diplomatic moves by Britain and France, had caused him to maintain reserve. Now, however, he was trying to cause dissension between the Governments and peoples of the so-called peaceful countries, and amongst the countries themselves. But attempts to disrupt the three-Power alliance between London, Paris, and Warsaw were useless. To work unremittingly and methodically for a further strengthening of its member States was imperative.

III. In official circles the speech is judged in a more positive manner than would appear from the press comments. Three criticisms are made:

1. The reasons given for the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia are not convincing.
2. The denunciation of the German-Polish Agreement and the treatment of German-Polish relations contain the seeds of armed conflict.
3. Prospects for general disarmament are even more slender after the speech.

On the other hand emphasis is laid on the renewal of the guarantee to France and the Führer's willingness to settle controversial problems by negotiation, including the limitation of naval armaments and the Polish question. The reason for the difference between the more positive official view and that of the press, which has been prevailed upon to put out negative criticism, it is hinted, is that the close association in foreign policy between the Western democracies, the inclusion of Poland, and the diplomatic activity of the last few weeks had made it more or less impossible for Britain and France to represent the speech in a positive light or as being a basis for easing the tension without admitting their mistakes. In the same way in internal politics they have harped too much on the German danger and the tension caused by Germany's behaviour to be able now suddenly to say that an understanding with Germany is quite possible.

The indignation already felt by the French people over the nervous tension which has been fed by the Government and the press, and substantially increased by mobilization measures, would be openly expressed if this tension were now found to have been premature or without foundation. Much light is also thrown on the subject by the fear expressed by Kérillis<sup>3</sup> in *Epoque* lest the speech should become the

<sup>3</sup> Henri de Kérillis, Deputy and journalist; editor of *L'Epoque*.

signal for a new campaign by "the party of appeasement, weakness, and concessions".

IV. Finally, I refer you to an article in *L'Homme libre*, a paper closely associated with Bonnet, which states that a settlement must be found for the Danzig question as well as for the other problems which might still darken the European horizon.

BRÄUER

## No. 291

1585/383112-13

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 151 of April 29

LONDON, April 29, 1939.

Received April 30—11:15 a.m.

I. The publicity given to the Führer's speech in the London and provincial press reached proportions never previously accorded to the utterance of any foreign statesman. A decisive part was played by the fact that the Embassy was able to distribute the authentic English text shortly after the beginning of the speech. This was particularly valued in the Foreign Office, at 10 Downing Street and in press circles. The new method proved thoroughly successful.

II. The reception in the press is fully reported by DNB.<sup>1</sup> In general, relief is shown that the danger of hostile developments in the near future has receded into the background. A critical attitude, chiefly in Conservative papers, is mainly based on the fact that legal measures for the introduction of conscription are not yet complete and an optimistic review could endanger them. The impression which the speech has made in official and political circles is, in any case, far more positive than appears from the press. Apart from a statement that Great Britain might also find herself prepared to give Germany a guarantee against attacks, official sources have refrained from giving the press any directive on the line to be taken. Characteristic for the real impression made, is the statement of a Conservative politician that the speech was a remarkable, statesmanlike performance, and the statement of another that Jewish financial circles are very annoyed that the speech was not of a "warlike" character.

III. Even though official circles emphasize that a final judgement of the Führer's speech will be possible only after careful study, it can already be established that the denunciation of the German-British Naval Agreement is more lightly regarded than that of the German-Polish Agreement. On the other hand the announcement of Poland's refusal of our offer is psychologically especially calculated to impress the British people.

TH. KORDT

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8436/E593990-93).

## No. 292

115/117576-77

*An Official of the Economic Policy Department to the  
Gauleiter in Königsberg<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

BERLIN, April 29, 1939.  
e.o. W IV 1663.

On the express instructions of the Foreign Minister I confirm the telephone conversation which I have just had with Vice-President Bethke:<sup>2</sup>

The Führer has decreed that all present Lithuanian interests in the Memel territory are to be preserved and that in no circumstances is Lithuania to suffer any material loss as compared with her situation before March 23.<sup>3</sup> Accordingly all measures against Lithuanian enterprises and Lithuanian property are to be cancelled forthwith; in particular commissioners placed in Lithuanian enterprises, including those run by the State, are to be withdrawn immediately, if responsible Lithuanian managers of the enterprises in question are available. Requisitioned Lithuanian goods and installations (including dock warehouses) are to be released at once. Jewish firms are to be liquidated under an agreement still to be made with the Lithuanian Government. In the case of Zemes Bankas an effort will be made to have it taken over by a German bank. Please arrange through the East Prussian provincial authorities that the East Prussian provincial bank named by them should establish immediate contact with Radusis, the representative of the Zemes Bankas in Kovno, with a view to discussing a basis for the taking over. In this matter also, Lithuanian interests must be carefully handled.

According to instructions, the Lithuanians are to be convinced that their economic activity in the Memel territory will offer them more opportunities after cession than before.<sup>4</sup>

SCHNURRE

<sup>1</sup> Erich Koch, Oberpräsident (head of the provincial civil administration) and Gauleiter of East Prussia.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hermann Erich Bethke, Vice President of the Oberpräsidium of East Prussia.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., before the cession of Memel; see Editors' Note on p. 80.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Schnurre's handwriting: "Telegram transmitted by Gestapo teleprinter".

## No. 293

2130/465413-15

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy*

BERLIN, April 29, 1939.

Pol. III 471 g Rs. II.

The German as well as the Italian Embassies are making efforts to obtain the release of the remaining Soviet Russian prisoners in Spain. Our claims are based on the following grounds:

At the end of 1936 the crew of the captured Soviet ship *Komsomol* were taken prisoners by the Spanish Nationalist Government. After lengthy negotiations Generalissimo Franco, at the time, placed the whole of the crew at the disposal of the German Embassy for an exchange against some German civilian prisoners in Soviet Russia and some German airmen in Red Spain. Whereas most members of the crew were already exchanged in 1937, seven of the *Komsomol* seamen placed at our disposal remained for unknown reasons in Spain. After a while it was no longer possible to ascertain their whereabouts, since the Spanish Nationalist authorities had not mentioned them by name in the lists of prisoners. Subsequent efforts by the German Embassy, who urgently needed the sailors for the purpose of an exchange, long proved unsuccessful. It was only through a reference supplied by a minute in the files here that the clues for a further search were provided. The enquiries thereupon made only succeeded because Air Attaché von Scheele personally searched the Spanish prisons concerned and discovered the sailors in Cadiz.

Meanwhile the Spanish Government, obviously ignorant of the fact that the Generalissimo had already some time ago awarded the prisoners to us, promised the seamen to the Italian Embassy for exchange against Italian prisoners. In doing so, however, they had lost sight of the whereabouts of the men involved, nor did the Italians succeed in finding them.

When the *Komsomol* men were then at last found by Herr von Scheele, the Italian Embassy as a favour renounced its claim to the prisoners, as they were first to be urgently considered in exchange for German airmen in Red Spain. This projected exchange never took place due to the end of operations and the Italian Embassy therefore renewed their claim to the crew, in order to be able to use them in the Italian-Soviet negotiations on the exchange of prisoners.

Our interest in these Russians has persisted since, according to reports from the German Embassy in Moscow, it was of considerable importance to us to offer the *Komsomol* men to the Soviet Government in exchange for German civilian prisoners. The Embassy stressed that

only by an offer of the *Komsomol* crew, to whom the Soviet Government attached the greatest importance, could the exchange negotiations which had long been at a deadlock be reopened. The German Embassy in San Sebastian was therefore instructed to come to an amicable agreement with the Italian Embassy, and to insist that the crew be assigned to us.

According to telegram No. 434 of April 26, copy of which is attached,<sup>1</sup> the Italian Embassy has now again renounced its claim but has drawn attention to the interest which the Italian Foreign Ministry and the Italian Embassy in Moscow, who had wished to use the crew in the interest of Italian prisoners in Soviet Russia, had shown in the question.

I request you, therefore, to raise the matter with the Italian Foreign Ministry, making use of the foregoing, as may seem appropriate, and to request the Italian Government definitely to relinquish their claims and to instruct the Italian Embassy in Moscow accordingly.

In view of the urgency of the matter and the importance we attach to it for our exchange negotiations with Soviet Russia, please report results by telegram.

It may be added that the Spanish Government would be prepared to place the *Komsomol* men at our disposal after the Italian Embassy has relinquished its claims but that naturally we attach the greatest importance to settling the matter with the Italian Government in a friendly way.<sup>2</sup>

By order:  
WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> The document attached to this despatch was not a copy of the telegram quoted but an unnumbered and undated draft (2130/465416) of telegram No. 73 to Moscow of April 29 (not printed, 8422/E592920-21) which repeated a telegram from San Sebastian, reporting that the Italian Embassy there had renounced their claim to the *Komsomol* seamen and had notified the Italian Foreign Ministry to this effect, whereupon the latter, at the instigation of the Italian Embassy in Moscow, had instructed them to demand that these *Komsomol* prisoners be held ready for exchange with Italian civilians imprisoned in Russia. The telegram also informed the German Embassy in Moscow of the instructions contained in the document here printed and left it to their discretion whether to inform the Soviet Government of the discovery of the whereabouts of the *Komsomol* prisoners and of Germany's intentions about an exchange.

<sup>2</sup> This despatch was repeated to Moscow on Apr. 29 (2801/548238-41). See also document No. 610.

## No. 294

F14/062

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 27

BERLIN, April 29, 1939.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE  
ESTONIAN MINISTER, M. TOFER, ON APRIL 29, 1939

The Foreign Minister received the Estonian Minister at 12:30 p.m. today. At the outset of the conversation, he informed him that the proposal made previously by the Estonian Foreign Minister that a

German-Estonian non-aggression agreement be concluded<sup>1</sup> had in the meantime been studied by the German Government. Now that Germany's relations with Lithuania were settled by the agreement on non-aggression contained in the German-Lithuanian Treaty<sup>2</sup> in respect of the Memel territory, the Führer had said that he was prepared to consider a German-Estonian non-aggression agreement also.

If the Estonian Government agreed, the Foreign Minister would request the Estonian Minister to call on him again after the Hungarian State visit<sup>3</sup> to hand him a German draft of the terms of such an agreement.

The Estonian Minister expressed his thanks for the Foreign Minister's proposal, and said that he was sure his Government would be happy to take it up.

E. K[ORDT]

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 253.

<sup>2</sup> In article 4 of this Treaty; see vol. v of this Series, document No. 405, footnote 2.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 295.

## No. 295

F14/050-61

### *Memorandum by the Minister in Hungary*

RM 28

BERLIN, April 30,<sup>1</sup> 1939.

#### RECEPTION OF THE HUNGARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER BY THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AT 3:30 P.M. ON APRIL 29, 1939<sup>2</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister first gave a survey of the general political situation. Among other things, he said that we did not take too seriously the flood of propaganda let loose by Britain. It was dangerous, however, for other countries to join such a campaign. The Berlin-Rome Axis was today the strongest element in Europe. We, for our part, had no intention of bringing about a trial of strength with Britain. In any case we would not attack. If, on the other hand, Britain and France wanted such a trial of strength, they could have it any day. What we wanted was a settlement, and it was probable that the consistent policy of the Führer would lead to this. The extent to which we had met France was shown by our renunciation of Alsace-Lorraine. If we intended to attack, we should not have sunk so many milliards in our Western defences. If France should really attack us, she would, in view of the enormous loss of life which she would have to sustain, have finally sunk to the position of a second-rate Power at the end of the war.

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here on the date of the conversation for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> Teleki and Csáky visited Berlin Apr. 29-May 2.



The Reich Foreign Minister added that he was firmly convinced that, whatever happened in Europe, no French or British soldier would attack Germany.

Our relations with Poland at the moment were disturbed. Whether Poland had really been well-advised to reject the extraordinarily generous offer of the Führer, by which Poland would have been 100 per cent the gainer, was more than doubtful. In any case, this offer could not be repeated.

South Eastern Europe was our sphere of interest. The Rumanian and Yugoslav Foreign Ministers had stated here<sup>3</sup> that their countries would never join a combination of Powers in opposition to the Anti-Comintern Powers, an action which, in view of relative strengths, would in any case be madness.

The Reich Foreign Minister emphasized that, if the Western Powers started a war now, Germany and Italy could put about 200 divisions into the field. These would be worth double the number in view of the leadership of Adolf Hitler and Mussolini. On the other hand, it would be years before Britain could really carry out conscription, the introduction of which at present was a psychological matter and left us absolutely cold. We knew, of course, that the British Empire was still strong, but in view of the general world situation Britain would think a hundred times before starting a war with us, into which Italy and Japan would at once be drawn as well. Spain, in such an event, would exercise at least benevolent neutrality. When the Reich Foreign Minister observed that he did not doubt that Hungary would take her place beside the Axis Powers in such a case, the Hungarian Ministers signified their agreement.

The Reich Foreign Minister then remarked that in his opinion the United States would send only war equipment but no soldiers to Europe in a European war. The situation had fundamentally altered compared with the World War in that Japan was then the ally of the Entente. At present the strength of the American fleet to the Japanese was in the ratio of 10:7.5. But, as he estimated that the spirit and quality of the Japanese sailors was twice as high as that of the Americans, the ratio worked out at 15:10. Moreover, it had to be remembered that about half the American fleet had to remain in the Atlantic Ocean so that the ratio of the Japanese to the American fleet would in fact be 3:1.

Poland was, militarily speaking, only a secondary problem for us, for in this connection one had only to remember that the Greater German Reich had 80 million inhabitants and Poland only 18 million Polish inhabitants.

Both Germany and Hungary could feel very satisfied with the events

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<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 227, 234, 262 and 271.

of the last year. Peaceful development was now in the interest of both countries, in order first to effect the internal consolidation of the territories so far won back.

On the Reich Foreign Minister observing that he would welcome the conclusion of a minorities agreement between Hungary and Rumania, Count Csáky replied that he had already had such a proposal made to the Rumanian Foreign Minister. The latter, however, had replied that he had no time to study the Hungarian proposal before his fortnight's visit to Berlin, London and Paris.<sup>4</sup> In this connection, the Reich Foreign Minister emphasized that the German people, and the Führer too, were inclined to judge a country by the way in which it treated its minorities.

He then mentioned that he had spoken to the Yugoslav [Foreign] Minister, as had Count Ciano also,<sup>5</sup> in favour of a settlement between Hungary and Yugoslavia. Cincar-Marković had expressed his readiness for this. Details had not been studied, but perhaps there could be a kind of non-aggression agreement and a minorities agreement. In any case, we had every interest in preventing Rumania and Yugoslavia from succumbing to the hostile propaganda campaign. The Reich Foreign Minister had told Gafencu that the British guarantee of Rumania had made a bad impression here. Moreover, in view of the military and political situation, it was worth nothing to Rumania. Any acceptance by a State of a mutual guarantee agreement with the Western democracies would be considered by us as an unfriendly act. The Yugoslav attitude was more clearly defined than the Rumanian. Cincar-Marković had promised, in the event of war, benevolent neutrality and the facilities of Yugoslav economic resources.

Count Csáky stated that the Hungarian Government were prepared to go a long way in making concessions to Yugoslavia, but it had not yet been found possible to overcome the difficulties arising from the fact that the Yugoslav Government considered that they could only conclude an agreement with the Hungarian Government on condition that Hungary make at least a similar offer to Rumania, which, in view of the situation, it was impossible for the Hungarian Government to do. Count Csáky reported that shortly before leaving Budapest he had received information that the Prince Regent had repudiated the results of the Yugoslav Prime Minister's negotiations with the Croat leader Maček. Feeling in Croatia was therefore very discontented. Maček had indirectly approached Germany, Italy and Hungary with the request that they should now lend his movement propaganda support. Count Csáky observed that he had up to the present given instructions

<sup>4</sup> Gafencu was in Berlin Apr. 18-20 (see documents Nos. 227 and 234), in London Apr. 23-26 (see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 278, 279, 285 and 295) and in Paris Apr. 28-29, where he had discussions with Bonnet, Gentin and Alphand.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 256.

that Hungary should not interfere in such internal affairs in Yugoslavia, and the Reich Foreign Minister replied that in his opinion, too, things should be allowed to mature. Besides, Germany was only indirectly interested in these matters, as in this respect Axis policy was decided by Rome. It was in the interests of all of us that matters in Yugoslavia should quieten down.

Summing up, Count Csáky said that he took it that it would therefore accord with the wishes of the Reich Government if Hungary established normal relations with Rumania, and went a step further in respect of Yugoslavia, with whom the clash of interests was not so great.

The Reich Foreign Minister then spoke of a report which he had received concerning statements alleged to have been made here by a well-known Hungarian editor,<sup>6</sup> alleging that Germany wished to incite Hungary to go to war with Rumania, and saying that, in view of the weakness of the Berlin-Rome Axis, it would be better for Hungary to join a group consisting of Rome, Belgrade, Budapest and Warsaw. He remarked that such statements were calculated to revive here the ill-feelings towards Hungary, now happily overcome, which had resulted from the events of last autumn. Count Teleki replied that too much importance should not be attached to such irresponsible talk.

The Reich Foreign Minister then again emphasized the importance we attached to the good treatment of the German minorities in Hungary. The Führer also had told Gafencu that the amount of sympathy felt for a country, not only by him but also by his people, depended on the treatment which such a country meted out to its *Volksdeutsche*. The Reich Foreign Minister mentioned as most urgent the early settlement of the schools question, and said that it was desirable that three *Volksdeutsch* representatives be elected to the Hungarian Parliament in accordance with the negotiations conducted so far with the Hungarian Government Party. Count Csáky maintained that suitable arrangements had already been made. Count Teleki observed that he intended to press forward step by step with the minorities question. As a Transylvanian by birth, he understood especially well the necessity for a satisfactory solution of the minorities question.

After the Hungarian Ministers had briefly reported that the committee formed from both Houses of the Hungarian Parliament had agreed to accept the Jewish Bill, the Reich Foreign Minister concluded with the observation, warmly approved by the Hungarian Ministers, that he regarded Germany and Hungary as having a common future.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>6</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "allegedly Ottlick". Perhaps György Ottlik, editor of *Pester Lloyd*.

## No. 296

F13/400-10

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND THE HUNGARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT, TELEKI, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER. ALSO PRESENT WERE THE HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, CSÁKY, THE HUNGARIAN MINISTER, SZTÓJAY, AND MINISTER OF STATE MEISSNER. FROM 4 TO 5:35 P.M. ON APRIL 29.

The Führer began the conversation by saying that during the present year Germany and Hungary had come one step nearer towards Paradise and that without any great crisis. It was the soldier's honour to serve his country by shedding his blood, but it was the politician's glory to settle the matter otherwise. One must be prepared, but the greatest merit in the eyes of history was to achieve success without having to resort to the last expedient. There are certain vital claims of which a nation must assure itself and, if this cannot be done by political measures, then the sword must speak. If the policy of the Western Powers were victorious, the result will be, not a diminished Germany or a weakened Italy, but Bolshevist chaos in Europe. A defeat in foreign policy of a military character would mean misery and ruin for all parties. Germany had built up her whole reconstruction and security from her own resources, but at every step which he, the Führer, had taken, he had met with the sullen opposition of Britain and France. They had literally tried to blackmail him. For example, at the time of the re-occupation of the Rhineland, MacDonald<sup>1</sup> had presented him with the alternatives: withdrawing the troops or war. But when he realized that Germany was in deadly earnest, he retracted. It had always been like this with England; she had never given up the attempt to prevent the restoration of German equality of rights. In 1933 Germany had been very weak. In 1934 she was in a state of transition. In 1935 there was scarcely anything to be seen, but today Germany was so strong that the screaming of the democracies left him completely cold. As a nation, we cannot renounce vital rights, merely because this does not please someone abroad; thus he, the Führer, would never renounce our right to the colonies, which are vitally necessary for us, but worthless to the English. The same is true of economic questions. America has the choice. He did not think that extensive relations could be entered into with America and he was thinking of generally curtailing his trade relations with America. When he assumed power, Germany had imported 900 millions' worth of goods from America and exported

<sup>1</sup> The Rt. Hon. J. Ramsay MacDonald, British Prime Minister 1929-1935; Lord President of the Council, 1935-1937. Hitler occupied the Rhineland in March 1936.

only 350 millions. In spite of this figure, the Americans had been foolish enough to start the boycott campaign against Germany. His first answer to this had been to import 600 millions less. Countless raw materials, which we had hitherto imported from America, were now being replaced by home products. How should Germany trade with the USA? Real trade is done only by equal buying and selling. Germany is an enormous consumer of foodstuffs and raw materials whereas America mostly herself manufactures the industrial products which Germany could deliver. If Germany wants to export to America, she is forced to invent something new and to launch this new invention as quickly as possible on the American market, where, after minor alterations, it is simply stolen. In the field of patent rights, America was a pure gangster State. After all, one could not go to war over these things. It was his aim to build up in peace in order to be independent in war, and there was many an invention which had made us extraordinarily independent; for instance, we now used only very small quantities of copper.

On the other hand, the Central European countries were much more important to us as parties to economic agreements. Unfortunately the Baltic States were rather slow and did not produce enough. That, however, might change one day, and in any case Germany could take all that they produced.

Csáky agreed that America's attitude was foolish. On his return from Italy,<sup>2</sup> the American Minister<sup>3</sup> had reproached him for Hungary's attitude to Italy. He had also asked him for his views on the Roosevelt telegram,<sup>4</sup> and reproached him in strong terms because Hungary had been the first nation to adopt a negative attitude to the Roosevelt telegram. When asked what was the reason for this, Csáky had replied that Hungary had had unpleasant experiences with Wilson's Fourteen Points and said that Hungary had gone down with Germany and had risen again with her. The American Minister had said "Be careful",<sup>5</sup> and asked him how were things with the Axis? When Csáky answered that it was unbreakable he had said that was a good thing; for then England would also have the chance to overthrow Italy. The Führer laughed and said that the Americans were confusing the situation with 1914. In contrast to then he pointed to the forces of today, referred to the colossal power of Russia in 1914 as compared with a weak Russia today, referred to France's comparatively much greater military power then than now and added that, at present, France's population was very low. Four French age groups meant 450,000 soldiers and four German age groups meant over 2 million

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 248 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> John Flournoy Montgomery.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 200.

<sup>5</sup> In English in the original.

soldiers. If the French were to start a war today and attack the Siegfried Line, they would, first, lose at least a million men before they could record even the slightest success. In war material France was still partly on a Great War footing. She had four thousand tanks, which could be shot to pieces by our armour piercing ammunition. Our air superiority was tremendous. French policy was mad but the military, who after all could see the relative strengths, advocated peace. He meant to give the Hungarian gentlemen the opportunity, before this year was out, of inspecting the Western front. There was nothing comparable to it in the world and he gave detailed proof of the inferiority of the Maginot Line as compared with the Siegfried Line.

Reverting to Russia, he said that according to our information this State had recently butchered four thousand high-ranking officers. Such a country could not wage war and furthermore there was another world factor—Japan.

Today we dominated the Mediterranean, Central Europe and the Far East. Britain was in no position to render help, but was running around everywhere looking for help. Before, and even after Munich, Britain had constantly given guarantees. Britain did not impress the Führer. They had been brave in the War, but so had the others, and after all during the War the British had had a front of 200 kilometres and we one of 2,000 kilometres.

Had he been in power then, the war would not have been lost. He had once said to Lloyd George<sup>6</sup> that if the roles had been reversed, if he had been a Minister then and Lloyd George a soldier, the war would have ended differently. Britain was again bluffing shamelessly, but this left him cold and for the immediate future he had no new objectives whatever. He had been obliged to annihilate Czecho-Slovakia; in doing so he had only cleared out an enormous powder magazine.

As to Poland, he was convinced that she would one day see reason, and he again described his offer to Poland. His attitude was that without access to the sea Poland was an absurdity and he could not understand why agreement could not be reached on the lines of cold reason. Moreover, it was madness to regard the extra-territorial highway as a military danger; for the Corridor was no military problem at all, at the most a question of six hours.

At our first conversation with the Polish gentlemen they had said that they had certain territorial interests in the Teschen area. The Ukraine did not interest them. Poland had more right than Hungary to Slovakia, the Slovak language was only a Polish idiom as Polish was practically the same language. But Slovakia under Polish rule was intolerable for us.

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<sup>6</sup> The Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, British Prime Minister, 1916-1922; he paid a visit to Hitler in September 1936.

However, nothing was unalterable and relations with Poland must also be settled one way or another. If Poland participated in the policy of encirclement, he would draw his own conclusions. A non-aggression pact must be free from all other encumbrances, otherwise it would be a deception. Referring to the British policy of encirclement, he said that he was on his guard; for caution was the mother of all wisdom. If Poland took part, she must accept all the risks involved in such a policy; as for him, he would arm.

Teleki: So shall we.

The Führer said that Hungary's own skin was at stake too; for not only Italy and Germany but the whole of Central Europe were involved. Teleki expressed his pleasure that this too corresponded to his views; he was particularly pleased about Yugoslavia's attitude.

The Führer said that everything could be won if one concentrated all forces on one point; he had proved this with Czechia, and only later would it be realized what a tremendous turning point in history the removal of this State signified. Even the German military authorities had realized the necessity for its removal only after the event.

Germany had not known that Czechia was militarily so well equipped. After the September crisis, we had thought that everything was in a state of dissolution but just how good was military discipline still, was shown by the fact that a telephone call from Hácha to Syrový,<sup>7</sup> ordering the soldiers to go to their barracks, hand over their arms, and the officers to report to the Germans, was made at 3:30 a.m. and already at 4:30 a.m. news was received that the order had been obeyed. The arms depots had been amazingly well looked after; he believed that Czechia had been the most strongly armed nation in the world. If Germany were correspondingly armed, this would mean 15 million rifles, over half a million machine guns, and some 20,000 aircraft. France herself had fewer new bombers than Czecho-Slovakia had had.

The removal of this powder magazine meant freedom in the rear for Germany and, indeed, for Hungary also. It meant an enormous improvement in the situation and one could now see ahead. A breathing space would do us all good. From the military point of view time was on our side, and also on Hungary's and Italy's. Mussolini too wanted a breathing space. He, the Führer, would therefore be glad if Hungary reached agreement with Yugoslavia. In themselves, of course, all these happenings down there were no concern of his and internal relations within Hungary were also Hungary's affair. Hungary had a kind of truce [*Burgfrieden*] with Rumania even if Hungary could not permanently renounce certain rights.

A change in England's strength was scarcely to be expected in the next two years. Even now she had no more steel and wanted to buy

<sup>7</sup> During his visit to Berlin on Mar. 15. See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 228.

from us. With us it was different, for we were at the peak of our war production. If England really meant to encircle us then the Führer would strike first. In that case, Mussolini would be at our side immediately, just as he, the Führer, would be at Mussolini's side. We would not make the mistake of allowing ourselves to be slaughtered separately. Csáky spoke with great disapproval of the attitude of the American Minister in Hungary. Only recently Csáky had put three questions to him:

1. Is it true that Beneš has formed a kind of Czech Government in Pittsburgh? 2. Is it true that he is trying to establish a kind of Legion there? 3. Is it true that prominent Americans are making large sums of money available for this Legion?

The Führer said that Roosevelt was fighting for re-election. Czechia was not viable alone, nor was she economically so either, and if given territory, would not be nationally viable. If she ever rose again, she would be the lackey of some group of Powers.

Csáky said that it was amazing how the British could bluff. When the British Minister<sup>8</sup> had asked him in the autumn whether the Germans intended to march and he had answered this question in the affirmative, the latter had left the room in a temper with the words "damn them".<sup>5</sup> Faith in the Western Powers was shattered.

The Führer spoke of Göring's visit to Libya<sup>9</sup> and the wonderful impression made on him by the Libyan troops.

Poland existed only as a result of the blood sacrifice of the Central Powers. The stupidest thing that they could do was to disseminate articles about the inferior German Army. The Führer, was, however, not altogether unhappy about this; for this would put the German army and the German Officers' Corps on their mettle. Italy saw in France her deadly enemy.

At all events he regarded the political situation with equanimity, whereas the others were trembling, and he closed the conversation with the remark that his one desire was that Germany and Hungary should remain good friends.

W. HEWEL

<sup>8</sup> Sir Geoffrey Knox.

<sup>9</sup> Göring arrived in Libya on Apr. 9. See document No. 252.

## No. 297

1818/415332

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 376

BERLIN, April 29, 1939.

Ambassador Attolico spoke to me today about the possibility of Italy exercising influence on Poland. I told Attolico that it did not



seem opportune to me that the Polish Government should now be encouraged by Italy to make offers to Germany which would probably be insufficient and therefore incapable of improving the German situation and the situation in general. For the time being matters should be allowed to rest.

However, I reserved my further attitude until I had learnt the views of the Reich Foreign Minister.

As was later established, the Foreign Minister had given Ambassador von Moltke instructions on the same lines.<sup>1</sup> Herr von Moltke will arrive in Warsaw about May 4.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

## No. 298

F9/0292

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

URGENT

No. 177 of April 30

For the State Secretary.

Tokyo, April 30, 1939—5:40 a.m.

Received April 30—3:00 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 139 of April 28.<sup>1</sup>

Further information revealed that the instructions to Oshima, reported in telegram No. 172 of April 27,<sup>2</sup> were issued by the War Minister<sup>3</sup> via the Japanese Military Attaché in Berlin<sup>4</sup> in order to acquaint Oshima with the Government's positive attitude before the Führer's speech.

Differences in the Cabinet on the question of possible reservation towards the Western Powers are increasing. Under strong pressure from the Army, the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Marine<sup>5</sup> have agreed to drop limiting the obligation to render assistance to the case of Russia, but continue to insist that this fact should be concealed in the text of the treaty, by emphasizing expressly the Anti-Comintern nature of the alliance. The interpretation of the treaty to be given to the Western Powers will depend on how this is decided. The above mentioned Ministers are furthermore attacking an alleged German demand that they should be committed by treaty to specific military undertakings (Hong Kong, Singapore). The Army too is said to regard

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 285.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 275.

<sup>3</sup> Lt.-Gen. Itagaki.

<sup>4</sup> Maj.-Gen. Kawabe.

<sup>5</sup> Admiral Yonai.

this as an encumbrance to the treaty and to prefer later military discussions.

A further meeting of the Cabinet is fixed for tomorrow.

Should the differences not be reconciled, there is a danger that the Government will resign, which, in the opinion of my confidant, would wreck the laboriously achieved agreement in principle, on an unrestricted defensive alliance, and would largely isolate the Army in its pact policy.

OTT

## No. 299

1625/388638-46

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, April 30, 1939.

Pol. II 1382.

Enclosed is a *résumé* of the course and the results so far of the large-scale propaganda action initiated by the British Government for the diplomatic encirclement of Germany after the creation of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

Please report any important additions or amendments to the *résumé* which you may think are required.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> Rintelen submitted his *résumé*, printed as the enclosure to this document, to Woermann on Apr. 26 with the question "Would you agree to this being circularized to Missions and the OKW?" A minute on Rintelen's cover note (not printed, 1625/388647) shows that Woermann answered this question in the affirmative. According to the distribution list (1625/388648-49) copies were sent to all the principal Missions.

[Enclosure]

### THE COURSE AND RESULTS OF THE BRITISH ENCIRCLEMENT ACTION<sup>2</sup>

1) The British encirclement action against Germany began a few days after the entry of German troops into Bohemia and Moravia. The first phase took the form of a circular enquiry addressed to a large number of Governments regarding their attitude in the event of aggressive action by Germany against Rumania.<sup>3</sup> It was addressed on March 18 to Paris, Warsaw, Moscow and Washington, the States of the Balkan Pact and also to the Governments of the British Dominions. The result<sup>4</sup> is only partially known but must on the whole have been

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<sup>2</sup> This *résumé* is an elaboration of a Rintelen memorandum of Apr. 25, entitled "The course to date of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations" (not printed, 1625/388661-64).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 83.

<sup>4</sup> For a summary of the replies received by the British Government, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. 1v, No. 496.

unsatisfactory. Whereas France has shown herself ready in any case to associate herself fully in any British action, Soviet Russia gave an evasive answer by making the counter proposal of a Six Power conference<sup>5</sup> (Britain, France, Soviet Russia, Poland, Rumania and Turkey). Washington showed no readiness to commit itself in advance over a possible European conflict. Poland drew attention to her treaty obligations with France and Rumania, beyond which she could not go. Hungary left the British enquiry, which was conveyed through the Hungarian Minister in London,<sup>6</sup> unanswered, while Yugoslavia stated with the greatest clarity that she would adhere to the policy hitherto pursued by her and would not participate in any formation of blocs.<sup>7</sup> Athens is said to have made any deviation from neutrality conditional upon the despatch of a British expeditionary corps; but it must of course be said that this information is unauthenticated and comes, furthermore, from a Bulgarian source,<sup>8</sup> while the Greek Government deny that any British enquiry was made at all.<sup>9</sup> Turkey merely drew attention to the Balkan Pact<sup>10</sup> which is known not to commit her to military intervention unless there is an attack on the inner frontiers of the Balkan countries. From the Dominions London apparently received only general declarations of solidarity,<sup>11</sup> in some cases with the reservation that armed assistance could only be counted on in the event of an attack on Britain herself. The determination not to be drawn into a conflict in Eastern Europe finds particularly clear expression in a statement by the South African Government.<sup>12</sup>

On March 20 the British Prime Minister then addressed himself to Mussolini in a special letter in order to obtain Italy's cooperation in his efforts. The Duce, however, declined this request by answering that he could not accede to Chamberlain's wishes as long as Italy's well-known demands were not considered.<sup>13</sup>

[<sup>5</sup> See document No. 75.

<sup>6</sup> György de Barcza. See document No. 80, footnote 2.

<sup>7</sup> Reported in telegram No. 65 of Mar. 22 from Belgrade (not printed, 7848/E569446).

<sup>8</sup> Reported in telegram No. 27 of Mar. 23 from Sofia (not printed, 7848/E569478).

<sup>9</sup> Reported in telegram No. 17 of Mar. 22 from Athens (not printed, 7848/E569451).

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 134.

<sup>11</sup> Reports on the attitude of New Zealand and Australia were received in telegram No. 5 of Mar. 25 from Wellington (not printed, 7848/E569454) and telegram No. 12 of Mar. 23 from Sydney (not printed, 7848/E569456). In telegram No. 10 of Mar. 31 from Ottawa (not printed, 2767/535832) the Canadian Prime Minister was reported as having stated in Parliament on Mar. 30 that while concern for Britain's security was a factor of Canadian policy, and an attack on Britain would constitute a threat to Canada's freedom, the Dominion was not prepared blindly to accept any suggestion of the British Government of the day nor general commitments regarding unforeseen cases of war.

<sup>12</sup> According to telegram No. 37 of Mar. 23 from Capetown (not printed, 7848/E569479-80) the South African Government had repeatedly declared that events in Central Europe, Czecho-Slovakia and elsewhere had not so far directly affected the Union. No doubt a period might come when the Union would feel itself affected by these questions in Central Europe. There could be no doubt that such questions might touch the safety or other interests of the Union, but until that happened the Government would not take action.

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 114 and footnotes 2 and 5 thereto.

2) As a further step London then proposed a joint declaration by Britain, France, Soviet Russia and Poland. This was to state that in the event of a fresh threat by Germany in Eastern Europe, the above-mentioned Powers would at once enter into consultation on the joint resistance to be offered. Whereas Paris is said to have agreed in advance to this plan for a Four Power declaration, Warsaw apparently wrecked it, probably because the Polish Government were afraid of being thus drawn into an anti-German group of Powers, the consequences of which Poland would mainly have to bear herself, should occasion arise, without having received any precise guarantees of security in return. In addition both Warsaw and Bucharest were equally afraid of the political consequences at home of an alliance with Soviet Russia. Moscow accepted the proposal but only under certain conditions, details of which are not known.<sup>14</sup> At the end of March, London dropped the plan for a Four Power conference.<sup>15</sup>

3) At the time of Bonnet's visit to London on March 22 and 23, when he accompanied the President of the French Republic, there was an exchange of notes or an exchange of memoranda between Britain and France, allegedly confirming an agreement already made orally in January last.<sup>16</sup> This provides that France and Britain would regard an attack by Germany on the Netherlands, Belgium or Switzerland as being directed against themselves, so that, in that event also, the mutual assistance obligations of the two Powers would become operative. Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland do not seem to have been consulted beforehand; the French Government had in any case, however, informed Switzerland of this intention beforehand<sup>17</sup>. The Netherlands and Belgium<sup>18</sup> deny participating in any way whatever in this Anglo-French agreement.

4) The opportunity of taking a marked step forward in the direction towards which the British Government were striving was then afforded by Poland. Under the influence of reports about Memel and Slovakia, great nervousness apparently set in in Warsaw, which led to mobilization measures being taken by the Polish army as early as the night of March 22-23.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, at this time, the Polish Government still rejected the British proposal for participation in the Four Power declaration against Germany. The British efforts for Poland, which went on regardless of this, then apparently led in the first place to a study of the question of a joint declaration by Britain, France and Soviet Russia in favour of Poland. In view of Britain's far-reaching willingness to take account of Poland's views, it was then decided in Warsaw

<sup>14</sup> See also document No. 112.

<sup>15</sup> See also document No. 121.

<sup>16</sup> See document No. 84.

<sup>17</sup> See document No. 181.

<sup>18</sup> See documents Nos. 139 and 162.

<sup>19</sup> See document No. 85.

(apparently about March 24-25) that, whilst declining the assistance of Soviet Russia, closer attention should be given to the idea of an extension of the alliance with France by a British guarantee. Simultaneously it was decided in Warsaw to reply to the German offer, renewed on March 21,<sup>20</sup> for a general settlement of German-Polish relations in a way tantamount to a refusal.<sup>21</sup> During the last days of March the British press then presented to the world false reports about German demands, couched as an ultimatum, to Poland and of German troop deployment against Poland, and reported on March 30 that Britain had offered a guarantee to the Polish Government. On March 31 this Declaration of guarantee for Poland was announced by Chamberlain in the House of Commons.<sup>22</sup> On April 1 the Führer, in his speech at Wilhelmshaven,<sup>23</sup> commented on the British efforts at encirclement.

From April 3 to 6, the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, paid a visit to London, which had been agreed upon for some time, and which concluded with Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons on April 6<sup>24</sup> in which was announced the joint Anglo-Polish Declaration on the decision taken by both parties to conclude an Anglo-Polish pact of mutual assistance.

5) In connection with the conversations, which took place on the occasion of the Polish Foreign Minister Beck's visit to London, about the conclusion of the Anglo-Polish pact of assistance, the question had already assumed importance as to how the Rumanian-Polish Alliance, hitherto directed only against Soviet Russia, could also be made effective in the event of an attack from the West.<sup>25</sup> M. Beck promised in London to open discussions on this question with the Rumanian Government. Independently of these Polish-Rumanian talks, the British and French Governments for their part, early in April, offered the Rumanian Government a guarantee of independence provided Rumania actually defended herself against a possible attack, agreed to an alteration of the Polish-Rumanian alliance on the lines mentioned above, and kept the British and French Governments constantly informed of any dangers threatening her. In reply to this proposal, the Rumanian Government sent the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry, Cretzianu, to London and Paris, while the Rumanian Foreign Minister Gafencu met the Turkish Foreign Minister in Istanbul on April 9. Little is known about either Cretzianu's negotiations or the meeting in Istanbul. At the latter, the major question seems to have been that of the guarantees which the Balkan Pact would offer Rumania in the event of an attack by a third

<sup>20</sup> See document No. 61.

<sup>21</sup> See document No. 101.

<sup>22</sup> See document No. 136.

<sup>23</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 183.

<sup>24</sup> See document No. 169, footnote 5.

<sup>25</sup> See also document No. 221, on which most of the information contained in this and the following paragraph appears to be based.

party. Reports as to whether the question of the passage of British and French warships through the Dardanelles for the protection of Rumania was also discussed in more detail, are contradictory.

6) While M. Cretzianu was still in London, the events in Albania intervened and gave rise in London to the idea of at once including Greece among the States to be guaranteed. This decision once taken, it became necessary for the British Government to announce it forthwith in the session of the House of Commons called for April 13. The French Government now insisted that Rumania too should immediately be included in the guarantee to be given. In London there seems at first to have been opposition to this, presumably because Rumania had not yet given a satisfactory answer to the conditions imposed. Even on the morning of April 13, there was apparently some doubt in London as to whether Chamberlain's declaration of guarantee in the House of Commons would also be extended to Rumania; after renewed and pressing intervention by France in this sense, the giving of a guarantee to Greece having apparently been made dependent in Paris on the inclusion of Rumania in the joint Anglo-French guarantee, simultaneous and identical Declarations of assistance to Greece and Rumania were made, on the afternoon of April 13, by Chamberlain in the House of Commons, and by Daladier to the French press.<sup>26</sup> In the Declaration to Greece the Anglo [*sic*] -Greek Exchange of Notes of April 10 and 11,<sup>27</sup> which had meantime taken place, was simply ignored, while no reason at all was given for the Declaration to Rumania.

7) In order to overcome the difficulties arising from the objections of the Poles and Rumanians to collaboration with Soviet Russia, without renouncing the cooperation of Soviet Russia which was considered indispensable, there appeared in the British and French press, in the middle of April, the idea of an air pact with Soviet Russia by which the latter was to pledge herself to come to the help of Poland or Rumania with her Air Force only should occasion arise. This idea, however, which was obviously only a *ballon d'essai*, evoked no approval from the Eastern European countries concerned. Then, in agreement with the French Government, the British Government chose the expedient of proposing to Moscow a promise of help to the adjacent States which might be attacked, without precisely specifying the nature of such help. It was merely to be stated that Soviet Russia pledged herself to "render to adjacent States subject to attack the assistance which these States themselves desired".<sup>28</sup> As could be gathered from the comments in the French and British press, this was

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<sup>26</sup> See documents Nos. 188 and 189.

<sup>27</sup> On May 23, the Foreign Ministry circularized an amendment (7391/E571256) to this memorandum stating that "Italo-Greek" should be read for "Anglo-Greek". See also document No. 226, footnote 5.

<sup>28</sup> See document No. 233.

conceived as, in the first place, the supply of war material and all other goods and raw materials vital for the conduct of war.

This proposal too seems to have evoked little approval in Moscow, where a revival of the old policy of collective security on the Geneva pattern seems to be more popular. In the first place Moscow raised the question as to what would actually constitute Britain's and France's *quid pro quo* in return for a promise of help of this kind, and did not accept the British answer that this *quid pro quo* was contained in the fact that the British and French obligation to assist Poland and Rumania also covered Soviet Russia against an attack from the West. Moscow was, on the other hand, able to point out that, as formulated, the Declarations of assistance given to the Poles and Rumanians might equally well be directed against Soviet Russia as against Germany. As a result of these considerations Moscow replied on about April 20 with counter proposals,<sup>29</sup> which envisaged a general Anglo-Franco-Soviet Russian pact of mutual assistance, to be precisely supplemented by military agreements, and at the same time required that both the British and French guarantees to Poland and Rumania and the Polish-Rumanian Alliance should be altered in such a way as to make it quite clear that they were directed against the West only and not against Soviet Russia.

The British Government's reaction to these Soviet Russian counter proposals is not yet known.<sup>30</sup> But they show clearly how British policy in Eastern Europe has landed between the upper and nether millstones of Polish and Rumanian interests on the one hand, and Soviet Russian interests on the other. The idea of a new edition of the pre-war Triple Entente in the form of an Anglo-Franco-Soviet Russian pact of assistance will certainly be welcomed in London within the framework of the encirclement action as a whole; of course, according to the Moscow plan, this pact of assistance is obviously intended to include the Far East as well, and London and Paris will scarcely be willing to do this. Finally it cannot be seen how the British Government will overcome the difficulties entailed by these conditions attached to the offer of a pact, particularly as far as Poland and Rumania are concerned.

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<sup>29</sup> See document No. 239.

<sup>30</sup> See also document No. 269.

## No. 300

F13/391-99

*Memorandum by the Minister in Hungary*

RM 29

BERLIN, May 1, 1939.

SECOND CONVERSATION<sup>1</sup> BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER, THE HUNGARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT AND THE REICH [*sic*—HUNGARIAN] FOREIGN MINISTER AT 3:30 P.M. ON MAY 1.

Count Csáky began by pointing out that since the partition of Czecho-Slovakia there were a number of questions to be dealt with in discussions between Germany, in her capacity as representative of the Protectorate Provinces, and Slovakia and Hungary. There were, *inter alia*, the division of State assets, and also questions of nationality. An exact demarcation of the frontier was impossible unless the land registers, some of which were in Bratislava, and others in Prague, were handed over. As the Hungarian Minister de Nickl<sup>2</sup> had recently tried in vain to find someone in the Foreign Ministry competent to deal with these questions, he asked the Reich Foreign Minister to give the necessary instructions. The Reich Foreign Minister promised that this would be done.

Count Csáky then reported that Field Marshal Göring had suggested yesterday<sup>3</sup> that the Hungarians should give the Poles to understand in some appropriate way that Germany had no aggressive intentions against Poland.

The Reich Foreign Minister thereupon asked the Hungarian Ministers to refrain from any such step since the Führer's generous offer, made once and for all, had been rejected by Poland. It was not we who had mobilized, but the Poles. That we were not taking this tragically was proved by the fact that we had taken no military measures ourselves. The Reich Foreign Minister then told the Hungarian Ministers about his conversations with Beck and Lipski on the Danzig question.<sup>4</sup> Before there were any further conversations for which the Poles must take the initiative, the Poles must first demobilize.

Count Csáky then asked the Reich Foreign Minister to see that the Reich Government authorities in Vienna did not interfere so much in the politics of Slovakia and Hungary. Agitation, inspired from Vienna, was being carried on in Bratislava against Hungary. Among other things the oration delivered by Minister Tuka on the occasion of the

<sup>1</sup> The first conversation took place on Apr. 29. See document No. 295.

<sup>2</sup> Alfréd de Nickl, Head of the Economic Department of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry with the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary.

<sup>3</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 126, and this volume, documents Nos. 61, 101 and 108.



funeral of the two adjutants of Reichsstatthalter Seyss-Inquart<sup>5</sup> gave proof of the strong support afforded the Slovaks by official quarters in Vienna. Count Csáky said that he was aware that the Vienna authorities often interfered in matters on their own responsibility, unprompted by, and even counter to, official Reich policy. For example, at a café at 105, Mariahilferstrasse, Vienna, Hungarian "Hungarists"<sup>6</sup> were receiving financial support from Vienna authorities. They were to some extent even being given military training, apparently to fight against the Hungarian Government. The Hungarian Legation had repeatedly complained about this.<sup>7</sup> Then for a time the Vienna authorities had held their hand, only later to disregard instructions from Berlin. The same was true of the anti-Hungarian attitude of a section of the Vienna press and of the Vienna radio which had repeatedly agitated against Hungary in the Ukrainian and Slovak languages. As to the support given to the "Hungarists" by the Vienna authorities, it must be said that the present Hungarian Government were strong and, from the German point of view, absolutely reliable. The pin-pricks from Vienna were therefore superfluous, but were likely to irritate public opinion in Hungary and to cause difficulties for the Government in Parliament. Count Csáky expressed the view that the anti-Hungarian circles in Vienna were supported by Reichskommissar Bürckel<sup>8</sup> and in particular by Reichsstatthalter Seyss-Inquart. The Reich Foreign Minister directed me to instruct Minister Kirchholtes<sup>9</sup> to take up in an appropriate way with the Vienna authorities the representations of the Hungarian Foreign Minister.

The Reich Foreign Minister then mentioned the *démarche* made to Under State Secretary Woermann by the Slovak Minister<sup>10</sup> here, in which the latter complained of frontier incidents, oppression of the

<sup>5</sup> According to a report in the *Völkischer Beobachter* of Apr. 16, 1939, in this oration the Slovak Minister Tuka had referred to the work of the two adjutants in furthering cooperation between Slovakia and the Reich.

<sup>6</sup> The Hungarian National Socialist Party, the so-called Hungarist Movement, had been banned and dissolved by the Hungarian Government on Feb. 24, 1939.

<sup>7</sup> In a *note verbale* of Apr. 1 (not printed, 7796/E566058) the Hungarian Legation complained that the Hungarist Movement were preparing an armed attack on Sopron. On the same day Heinburg forwarded a copy of the *note verbale* to the Gestapo with a cover note (not printed, 7796/E566059) requesting investigation and further action. In a letter of May 8 (not printed, 7796/E566087-88) the Gestapo replied that the Hungarian complaints had proved unfounded and that the new leaders of the Hungarist movement, appointed meantime, had given an assurance that they would not do anything which might cause Germany difficulties in her foreign policy.

<sup>8</sup> Josef Bürckel, Reich Commissioner for the Reunion of Austria with the German Reich and Gauleiter of Vienna.

<sup>9</sup> Minister Johannes Kirchholtes was appointed in January, 1939, liaison officer between the Foreign Ministry and Seyss-Inquart, the then Reichsstatthalter in Austria. No documents relating to the execution of these instructions have been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.

<sup>10</sup> Matúš Černák. In a memorandum of Apr. 29 (not printed, 2050/447383-84) Woermann recorded that the Slovak Minister had requested him to raise these three complaints during the visit of the Hungarian Ministers. Woermann had replied that he considered it possible that these points would be raised with the Hungarian visitors but that he was obliged to draw attention to the Hungarian counter complaints.

Slovak minority by Hungary, and the refusal of the *agrément* to a Slovak Minister in Budapest. The Reich Foreign Minister remarked that he did not want to make any comment on this, but would be glad if matters were soon settled.

Count Teleki answered that young members of the Hlinka Guard,<sup>11</sup> who were also unpopular in Slovakia, were primarily responsible for the frontier incidents. He explained how, he thought, the latest incident at Sobranc [*sic* ?Sobrance] had taken place. On the Hungarian side the 2 km. wide frontier zone was occupied only by frontier police. A mixed commission had been appointed to investigate this incident. In Košice at present there were fewer Slovak schools because nine-tenths of the area from which the population of these schools was drawn had now passed to Slovakia. Contrary to the statements of the Slovak Minister, the Slovaks had received permission to publish two Slovak daily newspapers. Permission for a third had just been granted. Count Csáky added that the *agrément* for the Slovak Minister had only been refused because the Slovaks had put forward as a candidate the Press Attaché of the former Czecho-Slovak Legation.<sup>12</sup> Anyone who was *persona grata* politically would receive the *agrément*. Moreover there was no Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires in Bratislava, but so far only a Consular representative. The Reich Foreign Minister instructed me to ask Under State Secretary Woermann to bring the foregoing to the attention of the Slovaks.<sup>13</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister then mentioned complaints which had reached him on the expulsion of Reich Germans from Hungary and the failure to grant residence permits and gave me an opportunity of underlining these grievances by quoting examples, whereupon I pointed out that a senior official of the Legation was almost exclusively occupied with time-consuming negotiations about these matters with the competent offices of the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of the Interior and the Aliens' Department of the Police. Count Teleki thought that much of this could perhaps be explained by the not very clearly defined division of responsibility between the Minister of the Interior and the Minister for the restored territories of Upper Hungary. He was requested by the Reich Foreign Minister to see that our grievances were remedied.

When the Reich Foreign Minister again [*sic* ?mentioned] the importance which we attached to a satisfactory settlement of the minority question, in particular the school question, Count Csáky showed him a

<sup>11</sup> The para-military organization belonging to the Slovak People's Party and named after the Party's founder, Mgr. Hlinka.

<sup>12</sup> Dr. I. Milecz. The *agrément* was eventually accorded for Ján Spišiak, who assumed his post on May 23.

<sup>13</sup> In a memorandum of May 4 (not printed, 2006/442996-97) Woermann recorded that he had informed the Slovak Minister of the Hungarian Ministers' reply to the Slovak complaints.

telegram of cordial thanks received that day by the Minister President from Herr Basch,<sup>14</sup> in which the latter, in the name of the 30,000 *Volksdeutsche* present at the inaugural meeting of the League of Germans in Hungary, now sanctioned by the Government, expressed his thanks for the helpful attitude of the Government and promised loyal cooperation. The Reich Foreign Minister remarked in reply that we would be able to work together wonderfully in this spirit.

The Reich Foreign Minister then reverted to our attitude to the Polish question and remarked that the Polish attitude had made us feel very bitter. The Poles had had every reason to be grateful to us for the return of the Teschen area and also for our cooperation in the establishment of the common Polish-Hungarian frontier. We had no intention of waging war on Poland, but he had let Beck know that a violation of the Danzig territory would be regarded by us as a violation of the Reich frontier.<sup>15</sup> Although we would welcome a settlement with Poland he, nevertheless, asked the Hungarian Ministers not to make the *démarche* mentioned at the beginning of this memorandum, as it would look as if the Hungarians were doing this, not of their own accord, but at our instigation. In reply to a remark by the Hungarian Minister President that a Hungarian statement to Poland to that effect would perhaps be expedient later, the Reich Foreign Minister answered that he could not empower him to do this. He again pointed out that Poland represented no military problem for us. In an armed conflict the British would coldbloodedly leave the Poles in the lurch.

Count Csáky then said that in the area of the middle reaches of the Danube and its tributaries there was the danger that the Slovaks and Rumanians were felling timber to an excessive extent, and that a clause in the Peace Treaty provided protection against this.<sup>16</sup> In reply to a Hungarian suggestion that we should interest ourselves in these matters, German experts had said that the best method would be to set up a sub-commission after Germany had joined the Danube Commission.<sup>17</sup> The Reich Foreign Minister said that he was not acquainted with the details and asked for information. Count Csáky told me later that the Hungarian proposal was intended to achieve cooperation in the Danube question between Germany, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania under German leadership, which might also have favourable political results for us.

Count Csáky then asked us to exert a calming influence on the Slovaks as, in view of the protection promised to their State by Germany, they thought they could take all kinds of liberties with Hungary.

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<sup>14</sup> Leader of the German National Group in Hungary.

<sup>15</sup> See document No. 101.

<sup>16</sup> The reference appears to be to articles 281 and 282 of the Treaty of Trianon.

<sup>17</sup> Germany became a member of the European Danube Commission by an agreement signed in Bucharest on Mar. 1, 1939.

Recently sixty Hungarians had been arrested in Bratislava and one of them had been tortured to death, for which fact a medical certificate could be produced.

The Reich Foreign Minister promised to bear this in mind and then mentioned the complaints received by us of cruel treatment of Ukrainians.<sup>18</sup> In doing so he pointed out the advantages of stabilizing the situation by granting autonomy. He said that Brody, the former Carpatho-Ukrainian Minister, who was supported by Hungary, had a bad reputation here. It was agreed to settle various points regarding Carpatho-Ukrainian agents in whom Admiral Canaris was interested, by direct negotiations between him and his Hungarian counterpart, Colonel Andorka, of the General Staff.

When the Reich Foreign Minister suggested that Vološin, the ex-Minister President, towards whom we had certain moral obligations,<sup>19</sup> should be kept in mind in the reorganization of the Carpatho-Ukraine, Count Csáky remarked that Vološin, to whom personally there was no objection, had a few days ago received an official communication from the Hungarian Government stating that he might return unmolested to Rump Hungary [*sic*? Trianon Hungary], where he had an estate. It was, however, not possible for him to return to the Carpatho-Ukraine, as his safety there at the hands of the local population was not assured. In the Carpatho-Ukraine, with only 600,000 inhabitants, there were three languages and three religions.

Count Csáky then said that two German criminal investigation officials had been arrested in Sopron, to which I added that the only case known to me was that of a German criminal investigation official who had brought to Hungary a box containing irredentist leaflets—"Down with the disgrace of the 1921 plebiscite"<sup>20</sup>—believing in all good faith that it contained toys. After the Legation had provided him with a lawyer, he had been acquitted by the Hungarian Court. Moreover, I knew that in several cases the Party authorities in Vienna had taken severe measures against irresponsible local officials who had overstepped

<sup>18</sup> According to a memorandum by Altenburg of Mar. 27 (not printed, 1969/437973) he discussed this subject with Erdmannsdorff, then in Berlin, who expressed his intention of taking the matter up with the Hungarian Government. In a letter of Apr. 3 (not printed, 1969/437986) Altenburg raised the matter again with Erdmannsdorff, requesting him to make representations to Csáky. Vološin himself had, on Mar. 27, addressed a letter to Ribbentrop (not printed, 1969/437974-76) appealing for German protection against Hungarian oppression.

<sup>19</sup> In reply to an enquiry by Heeren of Mar. 20 (not printed, 2381/499024) whether Vološin, who had arrived in Belgrade, would be permitted to enter Germany, the Foreign Ministry, in telegram No. 66 of Mar. 22 (not printed, 2381/499025), gave conditional consent, and in telegram No. 78 of Mar. 29 (not printed, 2381/499028) stated that he would be welcome in Germany, adding, for Erdmannsdorff's own information: "We possess information that Vološin is considering going to England but we have a pronounced interest in his taking up his residence in Germany as we wish to ensure that we keep in contact with him and have means of bringing influence to bear on him."

<sup>20</sup> i.e., the plebiscite held in December 1921, following which Sopron was detached from the Burgenland and retained by Hungary.

their authority. The Reich Foreign Minister said that Minister Kirchholtes should also raise this in Vienna.

In conclusion Count Csáky said that the Hungarian Ministers were very grateful for the friendly reception accorded them here. He referred in particular to the sentence in Count Teleki's reply,<sup>21</sup> primarily intended for foreign consumption, that the Hungarian Government fully and firmly reciprocated the confidence placed in them by Germany.

The Reich Foreign Minister again stressed the common destiny of the two countries. He mentioned in confidence that he was meeting Count Ciano in the near future and also dwelt, as in the first conversation, upon the favourable military-political situation of the Axis Powers. When Count Csáky remarked that, in the opinion of the Poles, a war between the Axis Powers and the Western Democracies would hit Poland and Italy hardest, the Reich Foreign Minister said, with reference to the last point, that this was a childish view. Poland would be destroyed with lightning speed by a fraction of the German army, thus leaving sufficient German troops available to protect the German and Italian Western frontiers. In the coming years the Axis Powers would be able to maintain their lead in armaments. Although our intentions were thoroughly peaceful we were ready at any time to throw in all our resources to the utmost.

After a short discussion on the Mediterranean problem in the event of war, the Hungarian Ministers again and again cordially invited the Reich Foreign Minister to visit Budapest. The Reich Foreign Minister accepted the invitation in principle and expressed the hope that he would be able to take advantage of it in the autumn; however, not before the Party Rally.<sup>22</sup>

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>21</sup> On Apr. 30, at the reception held in honour of the Hungarian visitors.

<sup>22</sup> In a circular telegram of May 4 (not printed, 230/151933-34) to the Missions at Paris, London, Rome, Brussels, Moscow, Warsaw, Ankara, San Sebastian, Bucharest, Belgrade, Sofia, Athens and the Consulate at Geneva, Weizsäcker summarized the results of the Hungarian visit to the effect that the friendly relations between the two countries had been confirmed and that the Hungarian statesmen had let it be known that, in the event of a European conflict, Hungary would take her place on the side of the Axis Powers. They had been told that a settlement between Hungary and her neighbours, Yugoslavia and Rumania, would be welcome to Germany.

## No. 301

57/35996

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

WASHINGTON, May 1, 1939—5:03 p.m.

No. 150 of May 1

Received May 2—1:00 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 136 of May 1 (Pol. Spez).<sup>1</sup>

After a certain period of doubt the American press has now turned its attention to that part of the Führer's speech which contains his answer to President Roosevelt. In the comments on this part of the speech, it is often frankly stated that the Führer's riposte attained its object, namely, both that of forcing Roosevelt to assume the defensive as well as of strengthening the basically isolationist attitude of the American people. However, as reports from the Consulates also show, public opinion is still vacillating, and is subject to the influences of American [?counter propaganda].<sup>2</sup>

Interest in the speech surpasses anything so far known. I have, therefore, directed that the English text of the speech printed here is to be sent by the Embassy, Consulates and reference libraries to tens of thousands of addressees of all classes and callings, in accordance with the agreed plan. Claim for costs to follow.<sup>3</sup>

I recommend that during the next few days, the Führer's reply to Roosevelt's peace appeal should be broadcast in headline form to this country over the German shortwave radio in the English news service.

THOMSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> This word is corrupt in the telegram as received.

<sup>3</sup> See document 280, footnote 3.

## No. 302

7802/E566165

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Estonia*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, April [sic May] 1, 1939—5:35 p.m.

No. 50 of May 1

Received May 1—6:59 p.m.

For the Minister personally.

You will I am sure have correctly interpreted my telephone message today to mean that, as a result of the Estonian initiative and our concurrence with it,<sup>1</sup> we will treat the conclusion of a non-aggression pact

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 294.

between ourselves and Estonia as accepted in principle. The object of my requesting you to undertake a *démarche* on the 2nd of this month is to reach an agreement with the Estonians at once, and thus, through Estonia, to break down the barrier of any possible reluctance which, although we do not expect it in the case of the other countries consulted, might well be set up by the intrigues of the Western Powers.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Settled by telephone conversation with St.S. v. Weizsäcker. File. Fr[öhwein] 3/5." See also document No. 316.

## No. 303

1625/358678-79

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 169 of May 1

ROME, May 1, 1939—8 p.m.

Received May 2—1 a.m.

Pol. II 1441.

With reference to your telegram No. 212 of April 29.<sup>1</sup>

Ciano received me today for the interview in connection with the telegram under reference, for which I had asked yesterday, on the occasion of the reception of Gafencu at the railway station.<sup>2</sup>

I first informed him in broad outline of the contents of telegram No. 197,<sup>3</sup> pointing out the strictly confidential nature of what I was telling him. He stated emphatically that this description of the Turkish attitude coincided with his own assessment of it. Following this I acquainted him with the substance of Ambassador Papen's report. He thanked me for this information, which was very interesting to him, and which he would convey to Mussolini. He himself was sceptical about the effects of a possible declaration by Mussolini, a statement which led me to remark incidentally that Berlin too seemed to share this scepticism. He wished to consider the matter. Such a declaration could perhaps be worked into a speech at some suitable moment, but that would probably make very little difference to Turkey's attitude. However, this attitude was not of decisive importance, for—and this was his special task—once he had made Albania into the "bastion" which he had recently described to me (my telegram No. 161<sup>4</sup> of April 24) then the complete dependence of the Balkan States on the Axis Powers would be assured. In this

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 286.

<sup>2</sup> Gafencu visited Rome Apr. 30-May 2.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 259 which was telegram No. 197 to Rome.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 256.

connection he quoted once again in how many minutes his aircraft, stationed in Albania, could reach Belgrade, Sofia, Bucharest and Athens. Italy was now working at full pressure to complete the Albanian road system (the Minister for Public Works<sup>5</sup> here mentioned to me in conversation yesterday that priority would be given to the improvement of the road system in Southern Albania), barrack-installations on air-fields and so forth. In six months he [Ciano] hoped to have his "bas-tion" completed. He gave the strength of the Italian occupying force detailed for Albania as eleven divisions, and repeated this figure when I remarked that it was greater than the one he had mentioned to me before.<sup>6</sup>

MACKENSEN

<sup>5</sup> G. Cobolli Gigli.

<sup>6</sup> In telegram No. 100 of May 2 (not printed, 1625/388680-81) Weizsäcker informed the Embassy in Ankara that Mackensen had reported that Ciano was sceptical about the value of a statement by Mussolini and that this view was shared in Berlin, since, according to information available there, Turkey had already gone so far in the negotiations with Britain as to make a complete withdrawal seem scarcely possible; however, as the negotiations had evidently not yet been concluded, warnings to the Turkish Government against such a one-sided anti-Axis orientation might usefully be continued.

## No. 304

FD/9294-93

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 143

[BERLIN], May 1, 1939—11:20 p.m.

For the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 177.<sup>1</sup>

1) In the draft pact, as the Japanese eventually submitted it to us at the beginning of April,<sup>2</sup> the Anti-Comintern thesis merely finds expression in the preamble, but not in the individual articles themselves. It seems to us possible to develop this Anti-Comintern thesis further in the preamble. On the other hand, it is quite out of the question that an anti-Russian tendency should be allowed to appear in any way in the articles of the pact. In these articles we must rather confine ourselves to stipulating the general nature of the alliance, which is not directed against individual Powers.

2) In view of this general wording employed for the actual articles of the pact, any restrictive interpretation in one sense or another is of course impossible and cannot be accepted by us in any circumstances.

3) If the pact is signed, the only definite consequence laid down will be that, in the event of an attack on one of the partners, the other two

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 298.

<sup>2</sup> Not found. See document No. 270, footnote 7.



partners will also *ipso facto* be in a state of war with the aggressor. On the other hand the nature and extent of the assistance to be rendered by the allies remains completely open for the time being. All questions bearing on this are reserved for the special secret discussions provided for, which are not to take place until after the conclusion of the pact. Naturally not even these can immediately determine all details and all eventualities in perpetuity. Rather, the agreements on the nature and extent of assistance will have to be adapted continuously to the political situation and military possibilities of any given time.

4) From this it is plainly evident that the objection, raised by the Foreign Minister and the Minister of Marine, that Japan would have to commit herself forthwith to military action, e.g., Hong Kong and Singapore, is entirely without foundation.

5) You are empowered to make use of the above arguments through the same channels as those through which your information has reached you. Apart from this, please continue to refrain from taking the initiative in any way in the matter. Particular caution is advisable in dealing with officials of the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo.

RIBBENTROP

## No. 305

1625/338682-84

### *Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, May 2, 1939—10:30 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 1475.

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

Information has been received here from a strictly confidential but completely reliable source, that as early as April 25 the Turkish Government sent the British Ambassador a reply to the British offer of a pact, proposing, substantially, the following:<sup>2</sup>

Britain and Turkey to undertake to render each other mutual assistance if, in the event of an attack by the Axis States, a war in which Italy participates spreads to the Mediterranean, or if the Axis States attack the Balkan States. In the event of an Anglo-Italian or a Turco-Italian war, Anglo-Turkish cooperation is provided for. In the event of an attack on the Balkan States, Turkey wishes, moreover, to make it clear that her obligation to render assistance would become operative

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Embassies in (1) London, (2) Paris, (3) Moscow, (4) Ankara and (5) Rome. The first three were referred to document No. 289, Rome to document No. 303, and Ankara to telegram No. 100 from Berlin (see document No. 303, footnote 6).

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 286, 287, 291 and 308.

if such a war were to threaten the security of Turkey. The Turkish Government make the conclusion of an agreement subject to the following conditions: firstly, there should also be agreed at the same time an Anglo-Soviet Russian undertaking of mutual assistance and a Soviet Russian-Turkish undertaking of mutual assistance, corresponding to the Turkish-British one; secondly, a settlement of the Bulgarian-Rumanian differences should be so brought about as to ensure Bulgaria's neutrality; thirdly, Britain should pledge herself to immediate consultation in order to make sure of Turkish defence preparations in respect of finance and material. As soon as these conditions are fulfilled, a formal pact of mutual assistance, of a lasting character, and destined to be made public, is to be concluded between Turkey and Britain.

Consequently the conclusion of an Anglo-Turkish pact of mutual assistance now really depends only on the result of the negotiations with Soviet Russia.

*For 1-4*<sup>1</sup>. In view of its source, you should refrain from making any use of the above information.

*For 5 only*<sup>1</sup>. I leave it to your discretion to pass on this information to Count Ciano, though in a very general form and with renewed emphasis on the strictly confidential nature of the communication.

Italian counter action is, as before, desired, even without guarantee of success.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 306

F9/0292

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, May 2, 1939—1:30 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Received May 2—12 noon.

No. 178 of May 2

For the State Secretary personally.

With reference to my telegram No. 177 of April 30.<sup>1</sup>

Determined struggles within the Cabinet still continue. Referring to the unpredictable nature of developments in Europe, and of Germany's immediate objectives, the opponents are mainly using the argument that Japan will not be fully capable of action for years to come. In conversations Army circles also repeatedly stress Japan's extensive commitments in China and express the hope that, should occasion arise, invocation of the alliance will be delayed as long as possible.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 298.

It is characteristic of the Foreign Ministry's lukewarm attitude that yesterday's statement by its spokesman (cf. DNB No. 127),<sup>2</sup> which is so far the only official comment on the Führer's speech, completely ignores the question of the Anti-Comintern Front.

OTT

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<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## No. 307

F9/0291

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, May 2, 1939—8:10 p.m.

No. 144

With reference to your telegram No. 178.<sup>1</sup>

Solely for the Ambassador personally.

For guidance on language to be held.

The hope expressed by Army circles at your end that invocation of the alliance might be delayed as long as possible coincides entirely with our own view, since both Germany and Italy have the greatest interest in a period of peace lasting for many years.

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 306.

## No. 308

B21/B005039-40

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 152 of May 2

WASHINGTON, May 2, 1939—9:32 p.m.

Received May 3—6:45 a.m.

With the expiry of the "cash and carry"<sup>1</sup> clause of the Neutrality Act,<sup>2</sup> the following provisional situation arises:

1) A declaration of the existence of a state of war is entirely at the discretion of the President.

2) In the event of the issue of such a declaration, the following come into force:

a) An embargo on the export of war materials,

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<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Of 1937. See *Peace and War*, No. 83. The so-called "cash and carry" clause, contained in Section 2, expired on May 1, 1939.

- b) An embargo on loans to belligerents,
- c) An embargo on travel by United States citizens on ships of belligerents,
- d) An embargo on foreign warships.

As against this, raw materials may be delivered under the American flag to belligerents and trade credit may be granted them. American ships would, therefore, again expose themselves to the risk of war on merchantmen. In order to avoid this, the present "cash and carry" clause will, possibly by resolution of Congress, be extended for one or two months. The Government, as before, are striving for the abrogation of the Neutrality Act in any form. They also consider the "cash and carry" clause dangerous because of its repercussions on the American money market. Interventionists desire a purely mercantile extension of the clause to war materials of every sort, from which Japan should be excluded by a special export embargo. Isolationists seem determined to fight for the Neutrality Act in its present form, if necessary by obstruction. Agreement on a practical proposal, through discussions in committees of both Houses, which, so far, have, if anything, hindered clarification of the question, seems virtually unattainable. The neutrality question has assumed an academic character which will have little influence on the conduct of American foreign policy, especially as it must be borne in mind that, under the impact of a European war and its repercussions, even endeavours to remain neutral might, at a moment's notice, be completely reversed.

THOMSEN

## No. 309

7798/E566123

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram (en clair)

No. 157 of May 2

LONDON, May 2, 1939.  
Received May 3—1 p.m.  
Pol. II 1471.

Mr. Kase, private secretary to the Japanese Ambassador, told a member of our Embassy recently that, according to information reaching the Japanese Embassy, the Anglo-Soviet negotiations were making no headway at all. The Russians were demanding a treaty of alliance from the British and French, and the guarantee of their Far Eastern frontiers, which the British were not disposed to concede.

TH. KORDT

## No. 310

183/85207

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 378

BERLIN, May 2, 1939.

I told the Swiss Minister today that an analysis of foreign reactions to the Führer's speech had shown that the Swiss press had adopted a more hostile attitude than that of any other country. It exceeded even that of America, Britain and France. It was incomprehensible to me how Switzerland imagined that such an attitude could be reconciled with her alleged desire for neutrality. Just as incomprehensible to me were the political aims which she was pursuing. I could only describe comments such as those of the *Berner Bund*<sup>1</sup> as acts of self-gratification but as serving no political object.

Herr Frölicher was able to say little else in reply except that unfortunately Federal Councillor Motta, who conducts Swiss foreign policy, was absent ill in the South.

Submitted to Senior Counsellor Dr. Schmidt (Press).

I agree to an article by Dr. Megerle<sup>2</sup> on the subject of the attitude of the Swiss press.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The reference is presumably to an article in the issue of Apr. 19, entitled "The Betrayal of the Fourteen Points". This article anticipated that, in his speech on Apr. 28, Hitler would revert to his familiar arguments, that Germany had, relying on the Fourteen Points, capitulated and entered into negotiations only to be subsequently betrayed by the victors, and forestalled Hitler by pointing out that President Wilson had first proclaimed the Fourteen Points in January 1918 but that Germany had not asked for an armistice until the autumn of 1918, when she realized her military defeat.

<sup>2</sup> Leader writer of the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*. See also vol. I of this Series, document No. 163, footnote 16a.

## No. 311

115/117581

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, May 2, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1125.

On the instructions of his Government, the Lithuanian Minister, M. Skirpa, gave me the following information today:

General Rastyskis, the Lithuanian Commander-in-Chief (who was the Führer's guest of honour on April 20), had been authorized by his (the Lithuanian) Government to accept a Polish invitation to visit

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[Führer]".

Warsaw. General Rastykis would be in Warsaw on May 9 and 10. Since the Lithuanian Government desired to pursue a strictly neutral line in their foreign policy, it would have been awkward for them to have declined the invitation, for such a refusal would have been an insult to Poland. The Lithuanian Government, however, considered it of prime importance to emphasize to us that the visit in no way denoted an anti-German trend; it was purely a matter of courtesy. Colonel Grinius, Lithuanian Military Attaché here, would give the same explanation to the High Command of the Wehrmacht.

The Lithuanian Minister told me that he was making these statements, owing to his anxiety lest the Polish press might seek, in their usual fashion, to make capital out of the visit.

GRUNDHERR

### No. 312

2943/570025-26

*The Reich Foreign Minister to the Finnish Minister in Germany*

BERLIN, May 2, 1939.

Pol. VI 1121.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: Acting on the instructions of your Government, you brought to my knowledge in a Note, dated January 21, 1939,<sup>1</sup> the proposals, worked out in concert by the Governments of Finland and Sweden, for amending the Aaland Convention of 1921 and requested the German Government to give their assent to these proposals. The reason given for the proposed new arrangement is that the security system of the League of Nations has been weakened and that difficulties of a political and military nature at present obstruct the application of the system of guarantees provided for in the 1921 Convention.

I have the honour to make the following reply to your Note:

The German Government attach decisive importance to the maintenance and effective safeguarding of the neutrality of the Aaland Islands. They therefore agree that military defence measures serving exclusively the purpose of ensuring this neutrality, may be taken on the Islands, and accept the plan submitted to them by the Government of Finland and the Royal Swedish Government. They assume as a matter of course that, should hostilities break out and affect the Baltic, Finland and Sweden will observe strict neutrality.

The German Government note a contradiction, however, in the fact that the Note from the Finnish Legation bases the proposed amendments to the Convention on the weakening of the League of Nations security

<sup>1</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 464.

system, but nevertheless desires to maintain the functions assigned to the Council of the League of Nations by the Convention. In any case, the German Government would like to point out that their attitude to the League of Nations and its functions will not be prejudiced by Germany's further participation in the Convention.

I take this opportunity, Your Excellency, of renewing to you the assurance of my highest consideration.<sup>2</sup>

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>2</sup> An identical Note, *mutatis mutandis* (not printed, 2943/570027-28), was addressed by Ribbentrop to the Swedish Minister. In a memorandum, St.S. No. 381 of May 2 (not printed, 2943/570029), Weizsäcker recorded that he received the Finnish and Swedish Ministers together and handed them these Notes.

### No. 313

1805/385515-21

*Minister Grobba to Under State Secretary Woermann*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BAGHDAD, May 2, 1939.

No. 101

DEAR HERE WOERMANN: Thank you very much for your kind letter of April 18—Pol. VII 663.<sup>1</sup> You must forgive me if I am not satisfied with the attitude of the Foreign Ministry as communicated to me by you, but return to the matter again. I do this particularly by reason of my consultation with Herr von Hentig.

You give as a reason for our not being interested in establishing closer ties with Ibn Saud the fact that the latter's attitude to Britain must still be regarded as uncertain. Herr von Hentig supplemented this information by saying that an important reason for the Ministry's doubts regarding Ibn Saud's attitude to Britain was the personality of Fuad Hamza, the Deputy Foreign Minister, who, according to reliable reports, is completely in British hands. I would point out that not only we, but also Ibn Saud, have doubts about the personality of Fuad Hamza. I was asked in confidence by the King's adviser, Sheikh Yussuf Yassin, on behalf of the King about our relations and conversations with Fuad Hamza and also whether we had given him money for the Palestine cause. When I replied in the affirmative, he gave me to understand that we should rather discuss questions concerning Palestine with persons designated to us by the Grand Mufti<sup>2</sup> as his agents. He said that while the King did not think that Fuad Hamza was appropriating for himself the funds given him for the

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 592.

<sup>2</sup> Haj Amin Al-Husayni, Mufti of Jerusalem since 1921; President of the Supreme Moslem Council of Palestine 1922-1936; President of the Arab Higher Committee since its foundation in 1936.

Palestine cause, he did not in any circumstances want any funds contributed for this cause to be used for any other than the real purpose, and he also wanted at all costs to prevent our being disappointed. These statements could not have been more definite. At my final audience the King also told me that in confidential matters of the kind discussed with us we (Germany) should negotiate only with his two advisers Sheikh Yussuf Yassin and Sheikh Khalid al-Hud and with no one else. Fuad Hamza was not mentioned. He is also rather out of favour with the King. It is true that in name he still holds the post of a deputy Foreign Minister, that is, of political adviser to the Foreign Minister, the Emir Feisal. I was told that he is only used for drawing up Notes and such like. However, he has obviously no longer any influence with the King. His office too is a kind of honorary one. He no longer receives a fixed salary but only special payments from time to time and he spends at least six months of the year in Lebanon. Even now he has not returned to Saudi Arabia with the Emir Feisal who passed through here yesterday on his flight to Bahrain, but remained in Lebanon. Thus in all our dealings with Ibn Saud we can discount Fuad Hamza and moreover if there should be any doubt about this, I only need to express the wish to the King to exclude Fuad Hamza from our conversations for good.

Moreover, as regards the King's attitude to Britain, I have completely revised my views while in Jedda. Although I have now lived more than seven years in the country adjoining Saudi Arabia I have so far, under the influence of the Arabian press which is largely ill-disposed to Ibn Saud, formed a completely false impression of Ibn Saud's relations with the British. I have gained the definite impression that he hates the British and is trying to extricate himself from their influence as far as possible. He feels hemmed in by them and in view of his present military weakness he is in constant fear that by stirring up and arming certain tribes the British might make serious difficulties for him. At present therefore he is forced to appear outwardly to be on friendly terms with the British and to seem to meet their wishes. He does so however with great inner reluctance. It is worthy of note that he granted the valuable oil concession in the province of Al-Hasa (on the Persian Gulf) not to the British but to the Americans and during my stay in Jedda he again transferred another concession in the neutral area between Al-Hasa and Kuwait to the Americans, although the [International] P[etroleum] C[ompany] made serious efforts to obtain it. In the three detailed conversations which I had with the King he never spoke of the British other than as liars. All his previous experiences make his dislike of the British understandable; for the latter always preferred the Hashemites to him and since he drove the Hashemites out of the Hedjaz (1925) they have ceased paying him subsidies. Ibn Saud has again and again told me



emphatically that being hemmed in by the British and their actions in the Arab border lands has caused him grave anxiety, and that he was therefore approaching us and asking us to help him in the internal reconstruction of his country and its rearmament so that in future he need no longer fear British intrigues in his country. As a further proof of Ibn Saud's anti-British attitude I quote his recently announced protest against the Anglo-Italian Agreement on the mutual guarantee of the independence of Saudi Arabia<sup>3</sup> and his secret financial support for the Palestine Arabs, which has been confirmed to me by reliable Arab nationalist quarters.

May I further remind you that the reason for my being sent to Saudi Arabia was not only to initiate diplomatic relations but rather to establish a place of safety for myself in the event of war. Recent events have clearly shown that, if war breaks out, Germans in the Arab countries which are under British and French influence will not be able to maintain their position. At best they will be forced to leave and at the worst they will be interned. Even diplomatic and consular representatives will have to leave these countries. It will be all the more valuable for us in such an event if at least one Minister can withdraw to neutral Saudi Arabia and continue to work from there in the Arab lands. In the event of war Ibn Saud offers us benevolent neutrality at the very least. In return, however, he expects from us the help he has asked for in the internal reconstruction and rearmament of his country. I have not the slightest doubt that he will keep his word if we grant his request now. In war the upholding of Germany's position in Saudi Arabia is of tremendous importance to us for political and military reasons. In the event of war we will most certainly try to cultivate relations with Ibn Saud with all available means; but then we would have to improvise and make great sacrifices to do everything that we could now build up in peace and quiet.

In this we would not be crossing the Italians' path; for Sillitti, the Italian Minister in Jedda, has told me several times that Italy is pursuing the same aims as ourselves in Saudi Arabia and welcomes our cooperation in the internal and especially in the military strengthening of Ibn Saud and his Government. Signor Sillitti told me that because of Ibn Saud's distrust of Italy we could do many things in Saudi Arabia better than the Italians. Compared with the opportunities and advantages offered to us in the event of war and even in peace time by cooperation with Ibn Saud, the price he asks is extremely little. He wants 8,000 Mauser rifles with ammunition and a small munition factory on favourable conditions of payment. At present we have plenty of Czech Mauser rifles, so that we can easily grant this request.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Anglo-Italian Agreement regarding certain Areas in the Middle East forming Annex 3 to the Anglo-Italian Agreement of Apr. 16, 1938 (see document No. 182, footnote 7).

I have also discussed these questions with Colonel Rohde, Military Attaché in Ankara. Some time ago he pointed out in a report that in the event of war the overland route from Irak to Palestine would be of very great importance for Britain, but that she would only be able to use this route if Turkey were allied to her or at least neutral, and that thus a neutral Turkey in the Near East would be harmful to us. He said therefore that the goal to be striven for at all costs was not to content ourselves with Turkey remaining neutral only but to draw her to our side again. What he said about Turkey applies in greater degree to Saudi Arabia, which borders directly on this land route and from which the oil pipe lines leading from Iraq to the Mediterranean could also be threatened, and along whose frontiers the British air routes to India run. Colonel Rohde therefore described my report as a valuable supplement to his own and directed the attention of the High Command of the Wehrmacht to my report.

There is no doubt that the British will not be very pleased if we consolidate our position in Saudi Arabia. Should we therefore expect to be able to resume friendly cooperation with Britain in the near future, there would probably be no point in irritating them by activity in Saudi Arabia. But if we are expecting a continuation of the tension between ourselves and Britain, or even a further deterioration of our relations with her, Saudi Arabia offers us a very important field of activity against Britain.

Herr von Hentig too, with whom I have discussed the situation thoroughly, told me that his former negative attitude had been based on false premises and that he was now ready to advocate acceptance of Ibn Saud's proposals and cooperation with him.

An opportunity to continue the talks conducted by me in Jedda will offer itself in the near future through the visit of the Royal Counsellor Sheikh Khalid al-Hud who is coming to Berlin in the middle of May<sup>4</sup> to hand the Führer the King's reply to my letter of credence and to continue the conversations begun by me in Jedda.

The Japanese too have become aware of the opportunities existing in Saudi Arabia. The Japanese Minister in Cairo recently visited Ibn Saud at Riyadh and discussed with him the conclusion of a treaty of friendship and a trade agreement.

I should therefore be extremely grateful to you if you would be good enough to re-examine the matter, and I very much hope that it will then be possible for the Ministry to revise its point of view. By refusing to grant Ibn Saud's requests we would drive him into the arms of the British or the Italians.

If the Ministry should change its attitude and be prepared to accede to Ibn Saud's wishes I would suggest that we procure ourselves a per-

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 541.

manent base at Jedda by renting and furnishing a house there as the other Legations do, and by leaving a Chargé d'Affaires there during my absence or at least for six months in the year. In that case it would be advisable at my next visit to Jedda, probably in January next year, for a Secretary of Legation or an Attaché to accompany me. After my departure he would then stay there for another four or five months, and during the summer when there would be very little to do in Jedda, he could work at this Legation in Baghdad and continue to deal with Saudi Arabian questions. It would then be necessary for another senior official to be assigned to this Legation who could deputize for me during my stay in Jedda. During the absence from Jedda of the German Chargé d'Affaires a local man could take charge there, perhaps with the rank of an honorary Consul. There is a suitable person for this in Jedda.

The situation differs from that in Saudi Arabia in the Yemen where the Italians claim to take precedence which, of course, we cannot dispute. Thus we could only engage in activity there with Italian consent. So far we have no treaty and no diplomatic relations with the Yemen. In these circumstances I could pay a visit to Sana only after previous consultation with Rome.

At the end of your letter you very rightly say that these questions are worrying me. Indeed they are. I believe that in Saudi Arabia a unique opportunity presents itself for us, an opportunity which we should not neglect, and I therefore again venture to express the hope that these statements of mine may induce the Ministry to revise its former attitude.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

I am, dear Herr Woermann, yours etc.,  
F. GROBBA<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "I have allowed myself to be convinced by this letter. W[Woermann] [May] 5."

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[EDITORS' NOTE. On May 2, 1939, the British Ambassador had an interview with Ribbentrop on Anglo-German relations and the Polish question. For this interview, of which no record has been found in the archives of the German Foreign Ministry, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. V, Nos. 330 and 333, and the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 118 and 119.]

## No. 314

2943/570072

*The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 54 of May 3

HELSINKI, May 3, 1939—6:45 p.m.

Received May 3—8:30 p.m.

Pol. VI 1152.

The Foreign Minister expressed to me the satisfaction of the Finnish Government over the German Aaland Note.<sup>1</sup> The Aaland question comes before the Finnish parliament this week.

The Finnish Government agree in principle to a non-aggression pact<sup>2</sup> although its repercussion on Finland's position of neutrality is still being studied, and provision being made for cooperation with the Scandinavian States. There is, however, some doubt on the part of the Swedish and Norwegian Governments, because, up to now, they have never concluded any non-aggression pacts, whereas Finland already has a non-aggression pact with Russia.<sup>3</sup> Sandler<sup>4</sup> has proposed a conference of the Northern Foreign Ministers.<sup>5</sup>

BLÜCHER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 312.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 284.

<sup>3</sup> Signed at Helsinki on Jan. 21, 1932. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 135, pp. 485-488.

<sup>4</sup> Swedish Foreign Minister.

<sup>5</sup> Weizsäcker replied in telegram No. 67 of May 4 (2886/565389) as follows:

"1) The Danish Minister Zahle, on instructions from his Government, has stated that a conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Northern States will be held on May 9 in Stockholm to discuss the non-aggression pact question.

"2) The Finnish and Swedish Ministers have privately taken soundings as to whether we desired a reply accepting or declining. Both have been told that our proposal was intended in all seriousness. Please conduct any conversations you may have occasion to hold accordingly."

## No. 315

1625/388685-56

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 142 of May 3

ANKARA, May 3, 1939—7:55 p.m.

Received May 4—3:00 a.m.

Pol. II 1485.

Yesterday on visiting the Minister President and having a thorough discussion of the general situation, I again ascertained that relations with Italy were quite decisive in determining the Turco-British conversations. He observed frankly that mobilization of the Turkish armed forces in 1926 and 1931 as a result of speeches by the Duce, in 1935 before the Abyssinian campaign, and on account of the present tension,

had cost more than 30 million Turkish pounds. Turkey could not go on affording this. Today, the Foreign Minister analysed for my benefit Turco-Italian relations. These had steadily deteriorated since Italy had adopted an unfriendly attitude on the question of possession of the small islands of the Dodecanese, and Albania had been the last straw. Italy, having started the occupation with 20,000 men, was today maintaining 72,000 men there including the heaviest artillery, which was certainly not needed against the Albanians. Some 100,000 men had been concentrated between Bari and Brindisi. The Italian press continued to describe the Balkan Pact as dead. To his satisfaction, his Minister in Belgrade<sup>1</sup> had reported that Foreign Minister Cinciar, who had returned from Venice with mixed feelings, had spoken of his visit to Berlin<sup>2</sup> with great pleasure and had obviously been strengthened by it. But the fact that Berlin was making some attempt to curb Italy by no means relieved Turkey of her obligation to secure her own position and to grasp any advantages available at present. For many years Italy had been on friendly terms with Britain and it was well known that Britain was anxious to restore this position. Should it ever come to pass again, it would be a sin for Turkey not to have secured the British promises which were obtainable today. To my urgent representations that any one-sided commitment would in all probability mean one more step along the road to war and would thus be in complete contradiction to the aims of Turkish policy, the Foreign Minister replied that, up to the present, nothing had been either initialled or even drafted. He did not himself believe there would be war. If Germany expected a world war, she would have to make Italy march 24 hours ahead of herself, to be sure of Italian participation; but Italy would not march. I meet with such opinions about our ally everywhere here and naturally contradict them very sharply.

The Military Attaché reports that in European Turkey, about 8 or 9... (group corrupt) are concentrated in Albania-Salonika-Xanthi.

In these circumstances, I consider that the view expressed in your telegram No. 100<sup>3</sup> as to the uselessness of Italian declarations is correct. I beg that consideration may be given as to whether, in face of the fact that it is of fundamental importance to Italy that Turkey should not ally herself to Britain in any way, some positive Italian contribution might not be obtained, such as a substantial reduction of her troops in Albania, the more so as these can easily be reinforced at any time. Also a definition of our attitude towards the Balkan Pact would ease the situation, since Turkey is well aware that the Dardanelles can only be attacked from the landward side and therefore looks on the Balkans as a buffer zone which needs to be safeguarded.

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> Ali Haydar Aktay.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 256, 262 and 271.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed; see document No. 303, footnote 6.

## No. 316

2886/565984-85

*The State Secretary to the Legations in Norway, Sweden,  
Denmark, Finland, Latvia and Estonia*

Telegram

BERLIN, May 3, 1939—9:00 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. VI 1142.

With reference to my telegram.<sup>1</sup>

For information.

Yesterday, at his request, the Estonian Minister was handed a draft treaty by the Foreign Minister.<sup>2</sup>

The preamble sets forth that both contracting parties are firmly resolved to maintain peace between their two countries in all circumstances. Article 1 runs:

"The German Reich and Estonia will in no case resort to war, or to the employment of force in any other form, against one another.

"If a third Power should take action of the kind indicated in paragraph 1 against one of the contracting parties, the other party will not in any way support such action."

Article 2 provides for the exchange of instruments of ratification in Berlin at the earliest possible moment. The treaty is to be valid for 10 years with the possibility of prolongation.

To (1) to (5); not to Tallinn:

Should any wishes be expressed to you about the communication of a draft treaty please advise the Government to act through their Minister here.

To (6); Tallinn only:

Should the Estonians express any requests to you relating to the text of the treaty please advise the Government to act through their Minister here.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 284; for Latvia and Estonia, telegrams Nos. 67 and 48, cited in footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (115/117805-06). A minute on the draft states that it was given to both the Latvian and Estonian Ministers.

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Minister Zechlin, Kovno, already informed orally."

## No. 317

1625/388690

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

TOP SECRET

No. 175 of May 3

ROME, May 3, 1939.

Received May 4—7 p.m.

Pol. II 1487.

Sent by air courier to save expense.

With reference to your telegram No. 217 of May 2.<sup>1</sup>

During a talk with Ciano, whom I was visiting on another matter, I informed him of the substance of the telegram under reference simply by remarking that, according to information in our possession, strictly confidential on account of its source but reliable, a positive result of the Turkish-British conversations appeared to us to be by now mainly dependent on the outcome of certain negotiations with Soviet Russia. Ciano thanked me for this information and, without asking for further details, replied that this morning he had requested the Turkish Ambassador<sup>2</sup> to call on him, and had spoken to him about certain reports saying that, in his opinion, if Turkey engaged with a third party in conversations wherein any evil intentions against Turkey were imputed to Italy, such conduct was not at all proper. For Italy, relations between herself and Turkey were governed, now as before, by the existing treaties and he could solemnly declare that Italy was pursuing no designs, either political, economic or even territorial, which could be taken as endangering Turkey. When I enquired how the Turkish Ambassador had reacted to this declaration, Count Ciano answered that he had merely taken note of it.<sup>3</sup>

VON MACKENSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 305 which was telegram No. 217 to Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Hussein Ragip Baydur. See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of May 3 and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 387.

<sup>3</sup> This telegram was repeated by Woermann to Ankara in telegram No. 108 of May 5 (not printed, 1625/388693-94).

## No. 318

583/242076-77

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 176 of May 3

ROME, May 3, 1939.

Received May 4—7 p.m.

At the end of my long conversation today with Count Ciano,<sup>1</sup> he

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 317.

took up a document, which was obviously lying ready, and asked whether he could say a few words to me concerning the Alto Adige.<sup>2</sup> He then read out to me the Italian text of a report received from Bolzano (presumably from the Prefect) which described the last meeting of [Party] functionaries held by Consul General Bene in the middle of April, and reported a speech said to have been made by him there to an intimate circle of Reich Germans. The purport of the speech was to recommend to the Reich nationals restraint in the public display of badges, flags and so on, for with due patience the moment would surely come when the Führer would restore this fragment of German soil also to the Reich. I answered Count Ciano that, from my own very accurate knowledge of Bene's personality, I could only describe this report as "*assolutamente assurdo*" and could not take it seriously. From his reports as well as from my talks with him, I knew the mentality of Consul General Bene too well not to be able to accept full responsibility for saying that expressions of this kind were inconceivable from his lips. I was well aware that the Consul General was deeply concerned at developments in the Alto Adige but he was so concerned purely because he realized what a burden on German-Italian relations it meant if, though in the words of the Führer a South Tyrol problem no longer existed,<sup>3</sup> it were not possible to convince the population of the unalterable necessity of the renunciation decreed by the Führer. All his efforts were directed to bringing this conviction home to them. Count Ciano received my reply in a thoroughly friendly spirit and made no attempt to adopt as his own the point of view put forward in the report. He enlarged further, however, on the question of the South Tyrol and said that he wished to take the opportunity at his next meeting with the Reich Foreign Minister to deal with the subject in perfect frankness and with the object of bringing into effect the idea, advocated at one time by the Führer himself, of transferring the German population of the Alto Adige to the Sudetenland. I mentioned that, as far as my information on the matter went, the idea had never been abandoned by the Reich Foreign Minister and, to my knowledge, it had also been the subject of talks between him and Attolico, but that the practical difficulties of carrying it out were, however, immense. Ciano replied that he, too, was not unaware of this but it was absolutely necessary for German-Italian relations that these difficulties should be overcome since the present state of things continued to be a sore point, the existence of which certain circles were only too glad to try and exploit. It was quite true that the relations between the two Govern-

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the South Tyrol; see also documents Nos. 143 and 163.

<sup>3</sup> In his speech in the Sportpalast in Berlin on Sept. 26, 1938, Hitler, speaking of German-Italian relations, but without actually naming the South Tyrol, said: "I have banished from the world a problem that from henceforth no longer exists for us." See Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 1516.



ments could never be disturbed by such machinations, for neither the Duce nor he himself harboured the faintest doubt but that the Führer, when he had spoken of the unalterable frontier of the Brenner,<sup>4</sup> had done so from innermost conviction, in fact he had once said in Venice, at the time when he was speaking to the Duce about his flight over the Alps, that the picture which he had then obtained from the aircraft had allowed him to recognize clearly the frontier line provided by Nature herself between ourselves and Italy. However, fresh unrest was always springing up in the minds of the public and this, although quite certainly fomented to some extent artificially, nevertheless existed. Lastly, Count Ciano said it would be a substantial step in the right direction if one could at least bring about an exodus of the former Austrians living in what was previously the South Tyrol, whose number he estimated at 10,000, and in whom he could not but see the main source of the trouble.

When he came to the end of his remarks, I again stressed emphatically that the starting point of this conversation had been a report which I must once more describe as ridiculous and absurd. Without contradicting my repeated assertion, Count Ciano closed the interview, saying again that an opportunity would shortly present itself of discussing with the Reich Foreign Minister this question, which represented the one and only disturbing factor in our relationship.<sup>5</sup>

VON MACKENSEN

<sup>4</sup> In his speech in Rome on May 7, 1938; see *ibid.*, p. 1462.

<sup>5</sup> At Weizsäcker's suggestion made to Attolico, St.S. No. 362 of Apr. 22 (not printed, 583/242062), Magistrati discussed the South Tyrol question with Heinburg on Apr. 27, who recorded (not printed, 2130/465247-48) that Magistrati said he had been received by Mussolini who had expressed much concern at the danger of serious incidents and emphasized that a solution would have to be found to avert this. Magistrati had said further that, in the Italian view, there should first be transferred to Germany those former Austrians now possessed of German nationality. In the South Tyrol this would be taken as meaning that Germany had finally renounced her claims; the transfer of the *Volksdeutsche* from the South Tyrol was less urgent. Heinburg replied that preparations for the resettlement scheme were under way, though no definite date could be given for its commencement.

## No. 319

169/82588-90

*Note by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department*

BERLIN, May 3, 1939.

e.o. Kult. A 1404 (g).

Subject: The position of the German national group in Rumania.

Dr. Bruckner, Gauleiter of the German community in Transylvania, gave the following report today on the position of the German national group:

- 1) The position had improved considerably in the last fortnight or

so. At the moment the Rumanian local authorities and, in particular, the military authorities were leaving the Germans complete freedom.

2) A very insidious propaganda was being conducted by the Hungarian minority against Germans, and especially against the leaders of the German element, among Rumanians as well as within the German national group.

3) The consolidation of the German national group had made further progress. On April 20 conservative circles under the leadership of Hans Otto Roth had joined the NAF (Nationalsozialistische Arbeitsfront)<sup>1</sup> *en bloc* and unconditionally.

The Transylvanian German national church, too, was cooperating with the leadership of the national group, loyally and without friction.

As regards the NAF, Herr Bruckner gave the following data:

The NAF represented the "Movement". It consisted of the "active squads" and "members at present non-active". The NAF levied 4 per cent of the latter's income. As it was hoped that the NAF would play a big part in future trade relations between Rumania and the German Reich, the influx of members into the NAF, particularly from industrial circles, was very great. Consequently, the NAF would be able to carry out all its tasks without any financial assistance. The "active squads" provided the administrative officers and a sort of self defence organization which could be employed at any time in the Diaspora territories. Besides this there was also a sort of SS.

I warned Herr Bruckner severely against endangering the whole organization of the national community [*Volkstumsorganisation*] by introducing into it militant organizations on the German model. In so far as giving economic help among the rural population went, or taking common action against natural catastrophes, these self defence organizations were certainly very good. But I would regard it as extremely questionable to set up within the national community organizations to which might, in certain circumstances, be allotted tasks which should fall to the police.

In this connection Herr Bruckner also gave details on the setting up of an intelligence service through the agency of the national group organizations [*Volksorganisationen*]. Here too I warned him sharply and severely.

4) Herr Bruckner asked for instructions as to what attitude the German national group should take towards the constantly expressed desire of the Hungarian national group for tactical cooperation with them in face of the Rumanian Government. The German national group leadership had *per se* no desire for this, but did not wish to run counter to any plans of the German Reich. I told Herr Bruckner that I saw no reason for departing from the tactics followed so far.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the National Socialist Labour Front.

5) Herr Bruckner reported that the military in Sibiu were starting to prepare for a visit by Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop. Swastika flags were being procured and military bands were rehearsing the German national anthem and the Horst Wessel song.

VON TWARDOWSKI

## No. 320

585/242407-08

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, May 3, 1939.

I enquired of the Bulgarian Minister today as to the efforts made by Turkey and Great Britain to achieve agreement between Rumania and Bulgaria on the Dobruja question<sup>1</sup> and added at the same time that we could not imagine how these efforts could result in a fulfilment of Bulgarian aspirations. The Minister replied that no British or Turkish *démarche* had so far been made to the Bulgarian Government themselves. He confirmed that Turkey had taken the initiative with Rumania, after the Bulgarian Minister President had frankly set forth Bulgaria's wishes during his visit to Ankara.<sup>2</sup> Turkey's interest arose from the Balkan Pact, which obliged her to assist Rumania if the latter were attacked by Bulgaria. The policy of Great Britain, as also of Turkey, was obviously aimed at dragooning Bulgaria into the Balkan Pact, in exchange for inadequate concessions in the Dobruja, and at turning the Balkan Pact into an anti-German combination. Bulgaria would not agree to this even if she recovered the whole of the South Dobruja and even if her aspirations for an outlet to the Aegean were satisfied. In her aspirations as against Greece, however, it was not only a question of access to the sea but also of urgently necessary colonization space for the peasant population. As to Yugoslavia on the other hand, Bulgaria put forward nothing more than a claim for the satisfactory treatment of her minorities. Naturally, Bulgaria could only begin to think of realizing her ambitions when her armaments had correspondingly increased.

The Minister then requested information on the conversations with the Rumanian and Yugoslav Foreign Ministers and with the Hungarian Ministers.<sup>3</sup> I gave him a summarized account. With reference to Hungary, Draganov mentioned reports in the French newspapers to the effect that Hungary wished to annex the whole of Slovakia. I replied that I knew nothing of this.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 67.

<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 20-22.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 227 and 234; 262 and 271; 295, 296 and 300.

The Minister had no detailed information on the visit of Potemkin to Sofia.<sup>4</sup>

M. Draganov referred lastly to the still considerable concentrations of Turkish troops in Thrace. The Bulgarian Government possessed no precise information as to Turkey's intentions.

WOERMANN

<sup>4</sup> In reply to an enquiry sent by Woermann in telegram No. 65 of May 3 (not printed, 7798/E566122), Bülow reported, in telegram No. 50 of May 5 (not printed, 7798/E566124), that Altinov, the Director of the Political Department of the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, had told him that Potemkin's visit to Sofia was merely a courtesy visit and that nothing concrete had been discussed.

## No. 321

2185/472230

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

CONFIDENTIAL  
St.S. No. 386

BERLIN, May 3, 1939.

Field Marshal Göring has just rung me up as he was unable to reach the Foreign Minister by telephone. He informed me that we were bound by contract to deliver to the Turks six 24 cm. guns of the most modern type, which they had ordered from us. Through a regrettable indiscretion, the Turks were also aware that the guns were now ready. By reason of Turkey's present political attitude (known to the Field Marshal from certain sources), and because of other reasons of a military nature, the Field Marshal was of the opinion that the delivery of these modern heavy guns to the Turks could not now be considered. The Führer was also of this opinion. An excuse such as firing tests, absence of the Field Marshal on a journey, or something similar must therefore be found. I promised to submit this information to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 322

F9/0200-80

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOP SECRET

No. 183 of May 4

TOKYO, May 4, 1939—3:08 p.m.

Received May 4—11:10 a.m.

For the State Secretary personally.

According to my informant, a telegram has been received from

General Kawabe<sup>1</sup> stating that the assurances of April 28 [*sic*] (cf. my telegram No. 172 of April 27)<sup>2</sup> given direct to [*sic* ?by] the Minister of War through Oshima<sup>3</sup> have improved the atmosphere of the negotiations.

The informant thought that further decisions by the Cabinet were not to be expected for a few days. I assume that the delay is due to the Minister's time being taken up with the conference of Provincial Governors now sitting, to the present meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of divisions, and possibly also to Ito's recent return from Berlin.<sup>4</sup>

As authorized, I have conveyed to my informant the views expressed in your telegrams No. 143 of May 1<sup>5</sup> and No. 144 of May 2.<sup>6</sup> My informant will probably convey them to the Minister of War, and will take good care that I am not mentioned as the source.

II. I learn that, in view of reports from Europe on British and French readiness for war, the Foreign Ministry is for the most part reckoning on the probability of war breaking out sometime between autumn and spring and is acting on this assumption. This attitude of the Foreign Ministry is at present receiving fresh backing from numerous tendentiously worded and alarming reports, mainly in the English language press, on the deterioration of the situation in Europe, particularly the German-Polish dispute, and also from reports on the anti-Japanese debate in the American congress.<sup>7</sup>

During the last few days, the Japanese press has, obviously of set purpose, reproduced Reuter reports on the alleged exclusion of questions relating to the Far East from the talks between Britain, France and Soviet Russia.

I learn from a reliable source that Ambassador Craigie,<sup>8</sup> with the obvious intention of disturbing our negotiations, expressly gave the Foreign Ministry the same assurances. I suggest that these threadbare British arguments be exposed by an authoritative statement by Germany.

III. In view of the continuing opposition of the Navy, I suggest that pressure be brought to bear through Admiral Endo<sup>9</sup> whose influence with the Navy is considerably greater than that of his predecessor.

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Japanese Military Attaché in Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 275.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 298.

<sup>4</sup> Consul General Ito. See Editors' Note on p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 304.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 307.

<sup>7</sup> The reference appears to be to the introduction in the House of Representatives on Apr. 18 of two bills restricting the movements of alien seamen and fishing boats, especially Japanese. See *U.S. Congressional Record*, 76th Cong., 1st sess. pp. 6148-6149.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Robert Craigie, the British Ambassador in Tokyo.

<sup>9</sup> Japanese Naval and Air Attaché in Berlin.

## No. 323

5568/E397896

*The Minister in Greece to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 41 of May 4

ATHENS, May 4, 1939—3:25 p.m.

Received May 4—4:10 p.m.

W 641 g.

With reference to my report of March 30.<sup>1</sup>

The local representative of Rheinmetall told me that we had decided on a credit of 50 million Reichmarks for the supply of arms to Greece. I take it for granted that Minister President Metaxas will broach the subject of the credit in a conversation which he arranged for with me today for Saturday the 6th at 12 o'clock. I request immediate instructions by telegram.<sup>2</sup>

ERBACH

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5568/E397902-03).

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 68 of May 5 (not printed, 5568/E397897) Clodius replied that no decision had so far been reached.

## No. 324

411/215235-36

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

ANKARA, May 4, 1939—7:10 p.m.

No. 145 of May 4

Received May 4 [*sic*]—1:30 a.m.

Pol. II 1498.

A conversation with Numan today, which lasted an hour, confirmed my view of the situation as reported previously.<sup>1</sup> Ciano's assurance to the Turkish Ambassador<sup>2</sup> is most gratefully welcomed as an effort on our part to ease the situation. But although Numan adheres in full to the pledge given by him to Herr von Ribbentrop,<sup>3</sup> Ciano's assurance is in no way sufficient to restore the situation as it existed before the occupation of Albania, particularly so long as unnecessarily strong contingents of troops garrison Albania. In this connection, recalling the proposal made by Turkey before the conclusion of the Balkan Pact,<sup>4</sup> for an alliance between Turkey, Italy, Greece and Bulgaria, Numan

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 315.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 317.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 59.

<sup>4</sup> Concluded on Feb. 9, 1934, between Greece, Rumania, Turkey and Yugoslavia; see document No. 67, footnote 2.

was of the opinion that perhaps a different and more positive attitude to the Balkan Pact on the part of Italy was possible today if Rome wished to extend her new position in the Balkans by peaceful means. I told him that I would ask Herr von Ribbentrop to discuss these matters on the occasion of his visit to Italy,<sup>5</sup> and that I presumed no measures would be taken here concerning *assistance mutuelle* with Britain before Italy had been given an opportunity to express her views again.

According to Numan, Potemkin had waited for the return of the Russian Ambassador, who was now back, and had so far not left the Embassy. Possibly his journey had been primarily occasioned by the removal of Litvinov.<sup>6</sup> The view here was that Stalin would now direct foreign policy himself, as Molotov was without experience.<sup>7</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>5</sup> Ribbentrop left for Milan on May 4 and had talks there with Ciano on May 6 and 7. See document No. 341.

<sup>6</sup> On May 3. See document No. 325.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal notes on the copy in the State Secretary's file (96/107795): (i) "Foreign Minister's Secretariat. I assume that this will be forwarded by you to Milan. W[eizsäcker] [May] 5." (ii) "Already done. Brücklmeier."

## No. 325

103/111301

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 61 of May 4

Moscow, May 4, 1939—8:45 p.m.

Received May 4—10:00 p.m.

The appointment of Molotov as Foreign Commissar, while retaining his office of Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, is published by the Soviet press in large headlines as an Ukase of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of May 3. The dismissal of Litvinov appears on the last page in the "News in Brief" column. The sudden change has caused the greatest surprise here, as Litvinov was in the midst of negotiations with the British Delegation,<sup>1</sup> had appeared in close proximity to Stalin on the saluting-base at the Parade on May 1, and as there had been no recent indications that his position was weakening. The Soviet press carries no comments. The Foreign Commissariat gives no explanations to press representatives.

Since Litvinov had received the British Ambassador as recently as May 2<sup>2</sup> and had even been mentioned in the press yesterday as a guest of honour at the Parade, it seems that his dismissal must be due to a

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 353 and 359.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, No. 344.

spontaneous decision by Stalin. Presumably, the decision is connected with the fact that differences of opinion have arisen in the Kremlin over Litvinov's negotiations. The reason for these differences of opinion may lie in the deep distrust which Stalin feels for the whole capitalist world. At the last Party Congress, Stalin urged caution lest the Soviet Union be dragged into conflicts.<sup>3</sup> Molotov, who is not a Jew, has the reputation of being the "most intimate friend and closest collaborator" of Stalin. His appointment is obviously intended to provide a guarantee that foreign policy will be conducted strictly on lines laid down by Stalin.

TIPPELSKIRCH<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Schulenburg had, according to a press announcement (see *The Times*, April 17, 1939), left Berlin on Apr. 16, with a German delegation, to attend the wedding celebrations of the Crown Prince of Iran in Teheran. He was recalled for consultations in telegram No. 85 to Moscow of May 6 (695/260437) which read:

"For the Ambassador or Chargé d'Affaires personally. The Foreign Minister requests Count Schulenburg and Captain von Schubuth [Assistant Military Attaché in Moscow] to be available on May 9 for discussions in Munich. In order to avoid attracting attention, they are requested to stay separately in Munich and not in the [Hotel] Vierjahreszeiten. If the Ambassador is not yet there, please inform him from Moscow. Sonnenleithner."

Tippelskirch replied, in telegram No. 64 of May 7 (not printed, 695/260431), that Schulenburg was still in Teheran awaiting a farewell audience with the Shah but had been instructed accordingly. Tippelskirch recommended that Hilger, who was due to arrive in Berlin on May 8, should be brought into the discussions in Munich. No German record of these discussions has been found, but see Mario Toscano: *L'Italia e gli Accordi Tedesco-Sovietici dell'Agosto 1939* (Florence, 1952), p. 28, for a report from the Italian Minister in Teheran, dated May 8, giving Schulenburg's explanation of his sudden recall, and *ibid.*, p. 32, for Rosso's account, dated May 24, of what Schulenburg had told him of the instructions given him by Ribbentrop during this visit.

## No. 326

F9/0288-36

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Tokyo, May 4, 1939—10 p.m.

No. 184 of May 4

Received May 4.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

The Foreign Minister summoned me and communicated the following:

The negotiations being conducted in Berlin and Rome on the Anti-Comintern Pact had come to a standstill ten days ago. In order to continue them, Minister President Hiranuma had addressed a declaration to the Führer and Chancellor with which the Foreign Minister was now acquainting me, and giving to me to transmit. I accepted the declaration, which was drawn up in both Japanese and French, and said that I would forward it by telegram through the Reich Foreign



Minister, I refrained from expressing any opinion. Immediately beforehand the Italian Ambassador was similarly informed and given a declaration for Mussolini.<sup>1</sup>

Text in translation:

"I have profound admiration for the great wisdom and iron will with which His Excellency the Chancellor of the German Government, Herr Hitler, is working at the magnificent task of rebuilding his country and establishing international peace based on justice.

"I for my part, as Japanese Minister President, am likewise striving to consolidate peace and maintain a new order in East Asia based on justice and moral principles.

"In this glorious hour it gives me pleasure to declare how effective the Anti-Comintern Pact existing between our two countries has proved in the execution of the tasks placed upon them. And if today I envisage the conclusion of an agreement to reinforce the Anti-Comintern Pact and to make cooperation between Japan, Germany and Italy closer, I do so not only from considerations of expediency only but also in the hope that, conscious of our common tasks, we may thereby contribute towards the consolidation of world peace based on justice and moral principles. As to what concerns the strengthening of our relations, I can assure you that Japan would be firmly and unshakably resolved to stand by Germany and Italy, even if one of these two Powers were attacked by one or more Powers without the participation of the Soviet Union, and she would also render them political and economic assistance and even such military assistance as was in her power.

"Whilst Japan is prepared to accept the principle of military assistance to Germany and Italy in accordance with the terms of such an agreement, in the meantime, in view of the situation in which she finds herself, Japan is not in a position at present nor will she be in the near future, to render them effective military assistance in actual practice. It goes without saying that Japan would willingly provide this support, if a change in circumstances made it possible.

"I should be particularly glad to receive the express assent of Germany and Italy to the aforementioned point.

"Furthermore, as a result of the international situation with which she is faced, Japan would be forced to exercise the utmost circumspection in respect of the interpretations (*explication*) she would give when this agreement was published. I should be glad to receive the unequivocal assent of Germany and Italy to this point, also.

"I beg to add that the proposed agreement is based on mutual confidence, and that to allow even the slightest doubt to arise as to the sincerity of my country, would be tantamount to destroying the very

---

<sup>1</sup> See also Toscano: *Le Origini del Patto d'Acciaio*, pp. 139-140, and the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of May 5, 1939.

foundation of the agreement, and would render it impossible of performance.

"The ideas which I have just expounded, derive from considerations of a moral and spiritual nature and cannot be influenced by reasons of expediency. If I have ventured to express them in all frankness, I have been guided solely by the sincere desire to direct our efforts towards a satisfactory result.

MAY 4, 1939."

(unsigned)

End of the statement.

I hear from Army circles that the Minister President has taken this surprising course in order personally to counteract doubts which have arisen in Berlin and Rome as to Japan's position and good will, and if possible to reach a compromise.

The Foreign Minister was obviously annoyed when handing over the declaration. I will try unobtrusively to clarify the views of the Army.

OTT

### No. 327

1625/368696

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 163 of May 4

LONDON, May 4, 1939.

Received May 5—9:30 a.m.

Pol. II 1497.

With reference to my telegram No. 144 of April 26.<sup>1</sup>

The British Government continue to decline the Soviet-Russian proposal for a pact of mutual assistance between Britain, France and Russia and to insist in principle on their original proposal (cf. my telegram No. 131 of April 19).<sup>2</sup>

KORBT

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 269.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 233.

### No. 328

321/193081-82

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, May 4, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1159.

The Lithuanian Minister, M. Skirpa, invited me today to a *tête-à-tête* luncheon in order, as he said, to be able to express his opinions to me

frankly. This he then proceeded to do, emphasizing that he was speaking in a private capacity.

In his remarks, a pronounced anti-Polish attitude came to light. He was particularly preoccupied by the idea—for which, however, he said he had no concrete proof—that a distribution of guarantees for the Baltic States had been, or might be made, in such a way that the three States, Britain, France and Russia would guarantee Estonia and Latvia and the three States, Britain, France and Poland would guarantee Lithuania. This kind of unsolicited guarantee was, however, extremely dangerous to small countries and only made more difficult the policy of strict neutrality which the Lithuanian Government wished to pursue.

Secondly, M. Skirpa was obviously greatly exercised by the question of Vilna. He had the idea that, should a German-Polish conflict break out, Poland might perhaps try to purchase the neutrality of Lithuania by voluntarily offering her Vilna.<sup>1</sup> I pointed out to him the extreme improbability of this idea.

Moreover, Poland's courtship of Lithuania in general was worrying him. The Lithuanian Government were perfectly aware that Poland was exceedingly annoyed at Article 4 of the Memel Treaty between Germany and Lithuania,<sup>2</sup> even though the Poles were making every effort to conceal their annoyance. He did not entirely reject the possibility that Poland might offer Lithuania a pact of non-aggression. In this case, the Lithuanian Government would be in a difficult position, since a small country could hardly refuse an offer of this kind, coming from a much larger one. The Lithuanian Government could of course make conditions, for instance that a minorities agreement should be concluded at the same time. The Poles, however, would probably be prepared to do this and Lithuania placed no special value on such a minorities agreement, which did not really offer any sufficient guarantees to little Lithuania if, as recent experiences had shown, good faith were lacking on the Polish side, e.g. about granting permission for the requisite Lithuanian schools in the Vilna area. The Lithuanian Minister, moreover, was well aware that Lithuania, by concluding a pact of non-aggression with Poland, would have her hands tied as far as a reacquisition of Vilna was concerned.

It is characteristic of Lithuania's outlook that M. Skirpa told me with some pride how, as Lithuanian Minister in Warsaw during the negotiations for the resumption of transport and communications between the two countries, he had punctiliously avoided at every conference and in every note the expression Lithuanian-Polish "frontier"

<sup>1</sup> Vilna had been occupied by Polish troops in 1920 and subsequently incorporated into the Polish State, a situation which Lithuania refused to recognize as legal.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of the German-Lithuanian Treaty, signed on Mar. 22, 1939, see vol. v of this Series, document No. 405, footnote 2. Article 4 contained an undertaking not to resort to force against each other or to support a third party in so doing.

and had invariably referred only to an "administrative line". The Poles had accepted this without protest but for their own part had always employed the term "frontier". There was no agreement on the demarcation of the frontier and Vilna was still looked on by the Lithuanians as their proper capital.

It appeared from all M. Skirpa's observations, which were doubtless inspired from Kovno, that the Lithuanian Government are obviously extremely preoccupied by the thought of what chances might be afforded them, with respect to the Vilna area, in the event of a German-Polish conflict.

I myself mainly played the part of listener during the conversation but I did emphasize that, the problem of Memel having been settled, we had no further matter in dispute with Lithuania, and that all the conditions for a friendly relationship were present.

With regard to the economic aspect, M. Skirpa remarked that, despite every endeavour to increase trade between Germany and Lithuania, the latter was nevertheless subject to certain limitations; firstly, because so small an economic unit as Lithuania could not exist without acquiring foreign exchange (England) and, secondly, because Germany could not, for the time being, supply all the goods needed by Lithuania.

GRUNDHERR

## No. 329

115/117797-95

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, May 4, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. VI 1161.

The Latvian Minister, Kreevinš, told me the following today, after his visit to the Reich Foreign Minister:<sup>1</sup>

He had stated to the Foreign Minister that the Latvian Government were prepared in principle to enter into negotiations with Germany for the conclusion of a pact of non-aggression. They welcomed the statements made by the Reich Chancellor in his speech and by the Reich Foreign Minister to the Latvian Minister.<sup>2</sup> The pact was to be concluded on a basis of absolute reciprocity; in the opinion of the Latvian Government, it would not be expedient to include other matters, such as the status of the German national group in Latvia; this question could not be a subject of negotiations.

The Foreign Minister had replied that no one had ever thought this question should be included in the negotiations or in the treaty. We had long wished to conclude a pact of non-aggression with the Baltic

<sup>1</sup> No other record of this interview has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 284.

States but the Memel problem had stood in the way; the way was now open. He had never considered linking this up with the question of the minorities; a nation of eighty million, however, always had national offshoots [*Volkstumsmässige Ausstrahlungen*]. Latvia would find it well worth while to settle any questions arising therefrom.

The Foreign Minister dictated to the Latvian Minister the draft of the non-aggression pact.<sup>3</sup>

The Latvian Minister handed to the Foreign Minister the enclosed draft of a press statement to be issued by his Foreign Ministry, and requested to be informed today whether the statement might appear in this form in the German and Latvian press tomorrow.

The Latvian Minister was very satisfied with his conversation with the Foreign Minister.

GRUNDHERR

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 316 and footnote 2 thereto.

[Enclosure]

zu Pol. VI 1161.

Pursuant to an interchange of views already initiated on previous occasions between the German and the Latvian Governments and to the offer contained in the Reichstag speech of the Chancellor on April 28, the two Governments have declared their readiness to enter into negotiations for a pact of non-aggression on the basis of absolute reciprocity.

No. 330

2886/566302

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, May 5, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1170.

1. At midday today M. Lundström, Counsellor of the Finnish Legation, gave me the following information on behalf of his Minister:

He had just been informed by the Finnish Foreign Ministry that Minister von Blücher (Helsinki) had been told by word of mouth that Finland had no objection in principle to the proposal made by the German Government,<sup>1</sup> although the Finnish Government did not quite see the necessity for it, since the two countries were such good friends. The Finnish Government were nevertheless considering the question and would give their official reply as soon as they had ascertained what effect the matter had on Finnish neutrality. The Finnish Government would

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., the offer of a non-aggression pact. See document No. 314.

appreciate having the text of the agreement unofficially today, as this would help them to reach a decision.

2. Acting on instructions I requested M. Lundström to call on me and gave him—*à titre privé*—a draft treaty similar to the German-Estonian one.<sup>2</sup> On this occasion I stressed that, in our view, the conclusion of such a treaty was in no way contradictory to Finland's declared policy of neutrality. We saw in it rather, a confirmation and strengthening of this policy of neutrality, especially as Finland had, after all, a Treaty of Non-Aggression with the Soviet Union as well.<sup>3</sup>

M. Lundström took note of our point of view and will communicate it to his Government at once together with the draft treaty.<sup>4</sup>

VON GRUNDHERR

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 316.

<sup>3</sup> Signed at Helsinki on Jan. 21, 1932. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 135, pp. 485-488.

<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum, St.S. No. 408 of May 10 (not printed, 2886/565414), Weizsäcker recorded that he had requested the Finnish Minister, Wuorimaa, to call on him; the Minister stated that he was expecting shortly to receive instructions from his Government to adopt a favourable attitude towards Germany's offer of a non-aggression pact.

## No. 331

F13/386-90

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

MUNICH, May 10,<sup>1</sup> 1939.

#### THE VISIT OF THE PAPAL NUNCIO TO THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR AT THE BERGHOF ON MAY 5, 1939, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND SENIOR COUNSELLOR HEWEL.

On May 4 the Papal Nuncio<sup>2</sup> informed the State Secretary that he had an urgent message for the Führer from the Pope, and would therefore like to speak to the Führer as soon as possible. On the Führer agreeing the Nuncio flew to Ainring accompanied by Baron von Geyr, and was received by the Führer at the Berghof at 4 p.m. in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister. The Nuncio afterwards stayed to tea with the Führer.

The Nuncio informed the Führer that the Pope had instructed him to propose to the Führer a conference of the five Great Powers of Europe for finding a solution to the political questions outstanding.<sup>3</sup> The Pope was deeply concerned about the tension in Europe and wished to do everything that lay in his power to ward off the danger of war from mankind. The purpose of the conference, the form and nature of which he did not specify, would be primarily to find solutions

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> Mgr. Cesare Orsenigo.

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 356 and 362.

to the two most urgent questions, namely, in the first instance the German-Polish problem and secondly the Franco-Italian problem.

The Führer asked the Nuncio to convey his thanks to the Pope for this suggestion, and opened by saying that he would first of all have to get in touch with Mussolini as he would not do anything without him. His relationship with Mussolini was one of close friendship, based on frankness and loyalty. He and the Duce would at all times act in unison.

The Nuncio agreed to this and said that the Pope would also approach Mussolini at the same time.

Examining the possibility of such a conference the Führer said that he did not actually believe that there was a danger of war, as the tension was due more to propaganda than to facts. It was true that between Italy and France, for instance, there were problems which had to be solved, but he could see in them no grounds for war. The first was the Statute of Tunis. Here a better situation must be brought about for the Italians. The second problem was the Suez Canal. In this matter the Italian claims were absolutely justified. It was not right that a Great Power such as Italy should be excluded from the control of such an immensely important vital artery of communication. Finally there still remained Jibuti, which was of great value to Italy but of none at all to France.

Germany had no direct demands on Poland. After all, Danzig was not Polish, and would in any case return to Germany one day. But if Poland made further demands he could only call it madness. The chief danger to European peace was Britain, who always incited the countries which had problems to solve with Germany and prevented a settlement, as she was again doing with Poland now. The Anglo-Polish Agreement was childish and had no practical value whatever. But the result of it was that Poland was adopting a megalomaniac attitude and, completely deluded and mistaken in her view of the situation, was following a policy which could of course be dangerous. However, he believed that reason would prevail, and in this case also, he thought, there was no danger of war. The Führer condemned the attempts by Britain to spread a complicated network of guarantees over Europe as it must cause local quarrels, which after all were always possible, to spread to the whole of mankind. If for instance there should be war between France and Italy, Britain would support France and he, the Führer, would automatically assist Italy. Then Poland would help Britain, and so it would go on until the whole world was aflame. It was also wrong for Poland to associate the denunciation of our Treaty with the question of Danzig. It was not Danzig but the British pact which had forced him to denounce it. But all this was no cause for war, for it would be madness to go to war for that. As far as we were concerned there would be no conflict, if Britain did not

continually pour oil on the flames. We definitely would have reached agreement with Poland had not Britain once again torpedoed such an agreement. Apparently Britain at present considered that her sole task in foreign politics was to torpedo any efforts at a settlement between Germany and Italy on the one side and other countries on the other. As practical examples of this he quoted Abyssinia, China (Chiang Kai-shek), Czecho-Slovakia, etc. In spite of all the clamour he saw no danger of war. Everything depended on Britain, for since 1919 wherever Germany was safeguarding her vital interests, there Britain had appeared as opponent and saboteur. For him Fascism and National Socialism were the only forces which constituted a guarantee for the maintenance of human order. This had been proved over and over again. For him, the collapse of these two forces would undoubtedly mean chaos. His aim, and that of Mussolini, was to guarantee order in Europe and to work towards an ever closer association of the countries of Europe.

In conclusion the Führer again asked the Nuncio to express his real gratitude to the Holy See. He would get into touch with the Duce immediately and he instructed the Reich Foreign Minister to take the necessary steps at once when he visited Italy. In a very short time he would then let the Pope have his answer.

HEWEL

[Enclosure]

MUNICH, May 10, 1939.

Annex to the Memorandum on the visit of the Nuncio to the Führer at Berchtesgaden on May 5, 1939.

At the tea which followed the official conversation between the Führer and the Nuncio no further matters of importance were discussed. An attempt by the Führer to lead the conversation towards the relationship which might be brought about between the Catholic Church and the German Reich as a result of the election of the new Pope<sup>4</sup> was not understood by the Nuncio, and so was not pursued. The Führer mentioned, while speaking enthusiastically of his visit to Italy,<sup>5</sup> that he would have liked to see St. Peter's. He had often looked across at it, but unfortunately, owing to the circumstances at the time, it had not been possible to visit it.

To this the Nuncio replied that there was once a wise man who had said that it was a very good thing not to see everything that one wanted to see, so that even in old age there would still be things to which one could look forward.<sup>6</sup>

HEWEL

<sup>4</sup> Pope Pius XII was elected on Mar. 2, 1939.

<sup>5</sup> May 3-9, 1938. See also vol. 1 of this Series, document No. 706.

<sup>6</sup> In a telegram of May 5, sent from Halle (not printed, 533/239030) Schmidt transmitted instructions to the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry that nothing was



## No. 332

388/211496

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, May 5, 1939.

zu W IV 1493.<sup>1</sup>

This afternoon I asked the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Counsellor of Embassy Astakhov, to come to see me and informed him that we had agreed, as requested by his Ambassador on April 17,<sup>2</sup> to carry out the Soviet supply contracts with the Skoda Works. Appropriate instructions had already been given. I asked him to inform his Government of this.

Counsellor of Embassy Astakhov was visibly gratified at this declaration and stressed the fact that for the Soviet Government the material side of the question was not of as great importance as the question of principle. He enquired whether we would not soon resume the negotiations which had been broken off in February.<sup>3</sup> To this I replied that I could not yet give him any answer to that, as the examination of the numerous problems which the last Russian answer had raised was not yet completed.

Then Astakhov touched upon the dismissal of Litvinov<sup>4</sup> and tried, without asking direct questions, to learn whether this event would cause a change in our attitude toward the Soviet Union. He stressed very much the great importance of the personality of Molotov, who was by no means a specialist in foreign policy, but who would have all the greater importance for future Soviet foreign policy.

SCHNURRE

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 215 and 217.<sup>3</sup> For these German-Soviet economic negotiations see vol. IV of this Series, chapter VI.<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 325.

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to be said in the German press of the Nuncio's visit to Hitler; Weizsäcker was to ask the Nuncio that nothing should appear in the Italian press either. A marginal note by Weizsäcker states that the Nuncio promised to see to this. In a telegram of May 6 to the German Embassy to the Vatican (533/239031) Weizsäcker stated that, although the visit had been mentioned in the international press, no information about it was being given by the Foreign Ministry.

## No. 333

1625/338703

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

ANKARA, May 5, 1939—10:05 p.m.

No. 149 of May 5

Received May 6—3:30 a.m.

Pol. II 1511.

With reference to my telegram No. 145 of May 4.<sup>1</sup>

My conversations with friendly diplomats complete the picture of how seriously Turkey considers herself threatened since the German-Rumanian Treaty and, above all, since the Albanian action, and how difficult it will be to detach her from her ties with Britain. I am convinced that only a complete reorientation of Rome towards the Balkan Pact could render this possible. I suggest that the Reich [Foreign] Minister should discuss the question in Rome. The accession of Albania and Bulgaria must be bargained for against territorial concessions, mainly by Rumania. Such an extended Balkan Pact, which was always the aim of the States in the Pact, should be expressly recognized by the Axis Powers as a security system in the Balkans, subject to the member States, including Turkey, pledging unconditional neutrality. This would tremendously strengthen Italy's position in the Mediterranean as against Britain and would probably wreck attempts at encirclement. Even if this idea is sceptically regarded in Rome, we could, by negotiations leading in this direction, win time against Turkish-British decisions.<sup>2</sup>

PAPEN

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 324.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Rintelen's handwriting: "The Under State Secretary has ordered that this telegram should not be forwarded" [i.e., to Ribbentrop in Milan].

## No. 334

485/231803

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 390.

BERLIN, May 5, 1939.

The Polish Chargé d'Affaires called on me this afternoon at 5:20 in order to present to me, on behalf of his Government, a Memorandum which he described as the Polish Government's reply to the Memorandum which the German Chargé d'Affaires handed to the Polish Government on the 28th of last month.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 276.

Prince Lubomirski added that the Memorandum had reached him only at the last minute and was consequently only in Polish.<sup>2</sup> He had had no time to make the otherwise usual unofficial translation into German and attach it.

Replying, I said to the Chargé d'Affaires that as I knew no Polish I was, of course, unable to read the Memorandum.

The Chargé d'Affaires then said he had completed his mission. I, for my part, now came to speak of the Polish Embassy's relations with the foreign journalists here: on this see my separate memorandum.<sup>3</sup>

The Memorandum will be translated<sup>4</sup> and submitted at once.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1785/407855-62).

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum, St.S. No. 391 of May 5 (not printed, 485/231606) Weizsäcker recorded that he had protested to Lubomirski about the Polish Embassy systematically receiving foreign journalists and supplying them with reports and commentaries and that Lubomirski had not denied this. Weizsäcker's protest was apparently based on the report by a confidential agent given in a note by Schmidt of Apr. 27 (not printed, 485/231607).

<sup>4</sup> Two versions of this translation were prepared in the Foreign Ministry. The first, preliminary version (translation I) is not printed (1785/407863-70). The finished version (translation II) is here printed as the enclosure to this document. Minor verbal differences appear in this version from the English version printed in the *Polish White Book* as No. 78 and the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6108, No. 16, which was evidently translated from the Polish in Warsaw. See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 402.

52/34733-45

[Enclosure]

#### TRANSLATION II

No. 52/101/39

Embassy of the Polish Republic.  
BERLIN, May 5, 1939.

1. As appears from the text of the Polish-German Declaration of the 26th January, 1934,<sup>5</sup> and from the course of the negotiations which preceded its conclusion, this declaration had as its object to lay the foundations for a new framing of mutual relations based on the following two principles:

(a) The renunciation of the use of force as between Poland and Germany, and

(b) The friendly settlement by means of free negotiation of any contentious questions which might arise in the relations between the two countries.

The Polish Government have always understood in this manner their obligations under the Declaration, and it is in this spirit that they have always been prepared to conduct neighbourly relations with the German Reich.

2. The Polish Government have foreseen for several years that the

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 101, footnote 5.

difficulties encountered by the League of Nations in carrying out its functions at Danzig would create a confused situation which it was in Poland's and Germany's interest to unravel. For several years the Polish Government have given the German Government to understand that frank conversations should be held on this subject. The German Government, however, avoided these and confined themselves to stating that Polish-German relations should not be exposed to difficulties by questions relating to Danzig. Moreover, the German Government more than once gave assurances to the Polish Government regarding the Free City of Danzig. It is sufficient here to quote the declaration made by the Chancellor of the Reich on February 20, 1938.<sup>6</sup>

The Chancellor made publicly in the Reichstag the following declaration regarding Danzig:

"The Polish State respects the national conditions in this State, and both this City [of Danzig] and Germany respect Polish rights. It has thus been possible to clear the way for an understanding which, starting with Danzig, has today, in spite of the efforts of certain disturbers of the peace, succeeded in finally taking the poison out of the relations between Germany and Poland, and transforming them into sincere and friendly collaboration."

It was only after the events of September, 1938, that the German Government expressed their intention of opening Polish-German conversations regarding an alteration of the situation in Danzig and regarding the transit routes between the Reich and East Prussia.<sup>7</sup> In this connection the German memorandum of April 28, 1939 refers to the suggestion put forward by the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs in his conversation of March 21, 1939,<sup>8</sup> with the Polish Ambassador in Berlin. In this conversation emphasis was laid on the German side on the necessity for a rapid settlement of these questions, which was a condition of the Reich maintaining its proposals in force in their entirety. The Polish Government, animated by the desire to maintain good relations with the Reich, although surprised at the pressing form in which these proposals were put forward, and by the circumstances in which they were advanced, did not refuse conversations although they considered the German demands thus couched to be unacceptable.

In order to facilitate endeavours to reach an amicable solution of the question, the Polish Government on March 26, 1939,<sup>9</sup> formulated their point of view in writing to the German Government, stating that they attached full importance to the maintenance of good neighbourly relations with the German Reich. The Polish point of view was summarized in the following points:

<sup>6</sup> In his speech to the Reichstag. For an English translation of relevant extracts on German-Polish relations see Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 1406-1407.

<sup>7</sup> See vol. V of this Series, document No. 81.

<sup>8</sup> Document No. 61.

<sup>9</sup> Document No. 101.

(a) The Polish Government proposed a joint guarantee by Poland and Germany of the territory of the Free City of Danzig, the existence of which was to be based on complete freedom of the local population in internal affairs and on the assurance of respect for Polish rights and interests.

(b) The Polish Government were prepared to examine together with the German Government any further simplifications for persons in transit as well as facilities of a technical nature for railway and road transit between the German Reich and East Prussia. The Polish Government were inspired by the idea of giving every possible facility which would permit the citizens of the Reich to travel in transit across Polish territory, if possible without any hindrances. The Polish Government emphasized that their intention was to secure the most liberal treatment possible of the German desiderata in this respect with the sole reservation that Poland could not give up her sovereignty over the belt of territory through which the transit route would run. Finally, the Polish Government indicated that their attitude in the question of facilitating communications across Pommerellen depended on the attitude of the Reich regarding the Free City of Danzig.<sup>10</sup>

In formulating the above proposals the Polish Government acted in the spirit of the Polish-German Declaration of 1934 which provides for direct exchanges of views on questions of interest to both countries, and authorizes each State to formulate its point of view in the course of negotiations.

The Polish Government received no formal reply<sup>11</sup> to their counter proposals for a month, and it was only on April 28, 1939, that they learnt from the Chancellor's speech and from the German Government's memorandum that the mere fact of the formulation of counter proposals instead of the acceptance of the oral German suggestions without alteration or reservation had been regarded by the Reich as a refusal of discussions.

It is clear that negotiations, in which one State formulates demands and the other is to be obliged to accept those demands unaltered, are not negotiations in the spirit of the Declaration of 1934 and are incompatible with the vital interests and dignity of Poland.

In this connection it should be pointed out that the Polish Government were unable at that time to express an opinion regarding the Polish-German-Hungarian guarantee of the independence of Slovakia which was alluded to in a general way in the German memorandum and more precisely stated in the Chancellor's speech of April 28, 1939, since a proposal of this description and in this form had never been made to

<sup>10</sup> Marginal notes in Bergmann's handwriting on the "preliminary translation" [see footnote 4]: "Linking questions together [*Junctim*]."

<sup>11</sup> Marginal note by Bergmann [see footnote 10]: "Wrong. 1st reply: 26 and 27.3. 2nd reply: 6.4".

them before.<sup>12</sup> It is, moreover, difficult to imagine how such a guarantee could be reconciled with the political and military protectorate of the Reich over Slovakia which had been announced a few days previously before the German Reich formulated its proposals towards Poland.<sup>13</sup>

3. The Polish Government cannot accept such an interpretation of the Declaration of 1934 as would be equivalent to a renunciation of the right to conclude political agreements with third States and, consequently, almost a renunciation of independence in foreign policy. The policy of the German Reich in recent years has clearly indicated that the German Government have not drawn conclusions of this sort from the Declaration as far as they themselves were concerned.<sup>14</sup> The undertakings publicly accepted by the Reich towards Italy and the German-Slovak Agreement of March, 1939<sup>15</sup> are clear indications of such an interpretation by the German Government of the Declaration of 1934. The Polish Government must here recall that in their relations with other States they give and require full reciprocity as being the only possible foundation of normal relations between States.

The Polish Government reject as completely without foundation all accusations regarding the alleged incompatibility of the Anglo-Polish Mutual Guarantee of April 1939 with the Polish-German Declaration of 1934. This guarantee has a purely defensive character and in no way threatens the German Reich, in the same way as the Polish-French Alliance, whose compatibility with the Declaration of 1934 has been recognized by the German Reich. The Declaration of 1934, in its introductory paragraphs clearly states that both Governments have decided to base their mutual relations on the principles laid down in the Pact of Paris of August 27, 1928.

Now, the Pact of Paris, which constituted a general renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy, just as the Declaration of 1934 constituted such renunciation in bilateral Polish-German relations, contained the explicit reservation that "any signatory Power which shall hereafter seek to promote its national interests by resort to war should be denied the benefits furnished by this Treaty". Germany accepted this principle in signing the Pact of Paris and reaffirmed it in the Declaration of 1934, together with other principles of the Pact of Paris. It appears from this that the Declaration of 1934 would cease to be binding on Poland should Germany have recourse to war in violation of the Pact of Paris. Poland's obligations arising

<sup>12</sup> Marginal note by Bergmann [see footnote 10]: "Proposal made on 21.3 by R.A.M."

<sup>13</sup> Marginal note by Bergmann [see footnote 10]: "By means of new agreement between the parties concerned. Additional security—nothing directed against Poland".

<sup>14</sup> Marginal note by Bergmann [see footnote 10]: "It is the contents that matter. Self-limitation needed".

<sup>15</sup> See document No. 40.

out of the Polish-British understanding would come into operation in the event of German action threatening the independence of Great Britain, and, consequently, in the very circumstances in which the Declaration of 1934 and the Pact of Paris had ceased to be binding on Poland as regards Germany.

The German Government in making a complaint against the Polish Government for undertaking obligations to guarantee the independence of Great Britain and in regarding this as a violation by Poland of the Declaration of 1934, ignore their own obligations towards Italy of which the Chancellor spoke on January 30, 1939,<sup>16</sup> and in particular their obligations towards Slovakia contained in the Agreement of March 18 and 23, 1939. The German guarantees of Slovakia did not<sup>17</sup> exclude Poland, and, indeed, as appears from the provisions of the above agreement regarding the distribution of garrisons and military fortifications in Western Slovakia, were directed primarily against Poland.

4. It appears from the above that the Government of the German Reich had no justification for their unilateral decision to regard the Declaration of 1934 as not binding. The Pact was, indeed, concluded for ten years without any possibility of denunciation during that time. It should be pointed out that the decision to regard the 1934 Declaration as not binding took place after the previous refusal of the German State to accept explanations as to the compatibility of the Anglo-Polish guarantee with the 1934 Declaration, which it was the intention of the Polish Government to furnish to the representative of the Reich in Warsaw.

5. Although the Polish Government do not share the view of the German Government that the Treaty of 1934 has been violated by Poland, nevertheless, should the German Government attach importance to the fresh regulation, by means of a treaty, of Polish-German relations on a good neighbourly basis, the Polish Government would be prepared to entertain suggestions of this kind, under reservation of their fundamental observations contained above in the present memorandum.

<sup>16</sup> In his speech to the Reichstag. For an English translation of relevant extracts see Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 1567-1578.

<sup>17</sup> Note in the German text: "Sic, probably 'not only . . . but' is meant."

## No. 335

1818/415393-34

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, May 6, 1939—10 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. V 3951.

I. With reference to Beck's speech,<sup>2</sup> an extract from the article in the *Völkischer Beobachter* which corresponds to the directive on treatment given to the rest of the German press, is being sent to Missions separately.<sup>3</sup> This may serve as general guidance on language to be held. In addition the following points can be made:

1) A great many lapses of memory crept into Beck's account of the German-Polish conversations.

2) Beck's speech is no contribution towards reaching an understanding.

3) The Führer's offer in his speech and at the end of the German memorandum of April 28<sup>4</sup> finds no answering echo despite its accommodating and peaceable tone.

4) We do not regard the speech as in any sense a sensational event, but as a relatively insignificant pronouncement by a weak Government.

II. The memorandum delivered by the Polish Government on May 5<sup>5</sup> tallies in the main with Beck's speech. Extracts will be published in the German press tomorrow. The same arguments apply to the memorandum as to the speech.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the principal Missions in Europe, the Embassies at Washington, Tokyo, Shanghai, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro and the Consulates at Danzig and Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this speech to the Sejm on May 5, see *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 15, and the *Polish White Book*, No. 77.

<sup>3</sup> In a telegram of the same day (not printed, 52/34771-73).

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 276.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 334.

## No. 336

1825/388706-07

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 153 of May 6

ANKARA, May 6, 1939—9:35 p.m.

Received May 7—2:45 a.m.

Pol. II 1525.

I regret to have to report that efforts to restore the situation have



been unsuccessful. On receipt of Turkish press reports of the conclusion of an agreement with Britain, I asked Numan urgently for a talk. I explained to him that in view of the profound fears felt here, I had made far-reaching proposals to my Government regarding the *status quo* in the Balkans and Mediterranean,<sup>1</sup> which would probably be the subject of conversations between the Reich Foreign Minister and Ciano today.<sup>2</sup> The result of these conversations should at least be awaited and we should not be presented with a *fait accompli*. Numan replied that it was correct that agreements, except for minor details, had been drawn up with Britain but that the date for a declaration in the Chamber was not yet decided.<sup>3</sup> The Mediterranean situation and threat to the Dardanelles inherent in the occupation of Albania had left Turkey no choice but to look round for allies in case of aggression. The mutual assistance pact applied only to the case of an attack on Britain or Turkey in the Mediterranean. Out of consideration for friendship with Germany and in order not to make her position more difficult, they had expressed themselves very vaguely about possible attacks on the Balkans. The agreement was purely a defensive one and calculated to allay anxiety in the Mediterranean and thereby to contribute towards general peace. I told Numan that the proposed declarations would be exploited in an unparalleled manner by our opponents as a further extension of encirclement and as a shifting of the balance of power against the Axis. I asked him to reflect on whether, even if agreements with Britain were concluded, none the less no public statement about them should be made which might be apt further to aggravate the psychological situation. He said that this was unfortunately impossible because, under the Turkish Constitution, the conclusion of any agreement depended on its acceptance by the National Assembly. [In the course of the discussion I gave him some indication of the substance of the proposals made by me to achieve a *détente* and referred to the possibility of thus securing an improved guarantee system in the Balkans and the removal of all Italo-Turkish tension. Numan acknowledged with gratitude our efforts to achieve a *détente*, but held that profound mistrust of Italy, as of all promises emanating from that quarter made such combinations impossible at present.]<sup>4</sup> Potemkin left yesterday; he is reported to have expressed his Government's agreement with the Pact, from which it must be concluded that a similar Turco-Russian agreement is being prepared.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 315, 324 and 333.

<sup>2</sup> At Milan. See document No. 341.

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 391 and 414. The declaration was made on May 12; see Editors' Note on p. 483.

<sup>4</sup> The text of this telegram, omitting the sentences in square brackets, was repeated to the Missions at London, Rome, Paris, Moscow, San Sebastian, Cairo, Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia in a circular telegram of May 10 (not printed, 1625/388708-09).

<sup>5</sup> Potemkin visited Ankara Apr. 28-May 5. See also *British Documents*, *loc. cit.*, No. 378.

[Faced with this situation, there seems to me to be nothing for it but for our press, basing themselves on Turkish press reports, to make known the conclusion of the agreements before the announcements in the Turkish and British Parliaments in order to forestall propagandist exploitation of them. To prevent the gravity of the situation becoming too apparent, we should, in agreement with the Italian press, emphasize the possibilities of peaceful settlement for all Mediterranean countries. I have informed the Italian Chargé d'Affaires and he is telegraphing his Government in similar terms.]<sup>4</sup>

PAPEN

## No. 337

5555/R395217-18

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 213 of May 6

BUCHAREST, May 6, 1939—11 p.m.

Received May 7—1:20 a.m.

W 659 g.

At my audience with King Carol today he mentioned a telegram which he had received yesterday evening from his negotiator in Berlin to the effect that at present none of the military equipment available from the Protectorate could be given to Rumania. This contradicted the promises recently made in Berlin by General von Keitel to M. Gafencu and, as soon as this fact became more generally known, it would inevitably lead to fresh attacks on the German-Rumanian Economic Treaty.<sup>1</sup>

I replied to the King that I was not informed of the state of the economic negotiations in Berlin, but I did know that in the question of rates of exchange no conciliatory gesture from Rumania had been observed.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, I could well imagine that the tension caused primarily by Anglo-Polish policy made it difficult for the German Army Command to part with war material just now. Furthermore we must naturally always ask ourselves whether the 1916 case might not recur in Rumania.<sup>3</sup>

In his reply the King emphasized that I could tell my Government this: "The case of 1916 would not recur, as grounds for Rumania's entry into war no longer existed since the reunion with Rumanians then living in Austria-Hungary. Rumania would be neutral, the

<sup>1</sup> Of March 23. See document No. 78.

<sup>2</sup> According to a telegram from Fabricius of Apr. 6, telegram No. 166 (not printed, 169/82554-56), the Rumanian Government would not consent to revising the exchange rates in Germany's favour. See also document No. 227.

<sup>3</sup> A reference to the fact that, despite the Treaty of Alliance with Germany of Oct. 31, 1883, Rumania entered the First World War on the side of the Entente on Aug. 27, 1916.

only attitude in keeping with her interests, and would remain neutral as long as she was not attacked; if attacked she would defend herself, from whatever side the attack might come."

In reply to my question whether, if she remained neutral, Rumania would supply us with mineral oil and wheat the King said: We shall do this in accordance with the existing treaties. But naturally we [the Germans] must also abide by the Trade Agreement. If we left Rumania in the lurch now with deliveries of armaments, he would have to provide himself from elsewhere and that would shift the whole foundation of the Economic Treaty, which his Government wanted to carry out loyally.

The King asked me to make further representations to the Reich Government.

He seemed pleased that Colonel Gerstenberg<sup>4</sup> is coming; I would recommend that at least a gesture be made over war material from the Protectorate, like that planned in the negotiations of the air commission.<sup>5</sup>

The King said that he had reports about the Hungarian visit to Berlin<sup>6</sup> and was gratified to note that the Reich Government had urged Hungary to come to an understanding with Rumania and Yugoslavia. I added that we had also been very pleased with the visit of the Yugoslav Foreign Minister.<sup>7</sup>

The King remarked that he always felt a certain distrust on the part of Germany. I replied to this by saying that we had been very pleased with Gafencu's visit;<sup>8</sup> however, reports kept coming in, even from Rumania's allies, which gave rise to doubts as to the sincerity of the Rumanian Government's attitude. The King repeatedly stressed that there were no grounds for this.

Nor would the Government conclude any agreement with Potemkin who was passing through here again soon; however, he could not be refused an audience, if he asked for one.<sup>9</sup>

It is my impression that if we could still show ourselves forthcoming in the armaments question, it is quite possible that Rumania would adopt an attitude similar to that which Yugoslavia obviously intends to take up.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>4</sup> Colonel Gerstenberg was Air Attaché at both the Embassy at Warsaw and the Legation at Bucharest. His headquarters were at Warsaw.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 152.

<sup>6</sup> See documents Nos. 295, 296 and 300.

<sup>7</sup> See documents Nos. 262 and 271.

<sup>8</sup> See documents Nos. 227 and 234.

<sup>9</sup> See also documents Nos. 342 and 349.

## No. 338

1880/424496-99

*The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1833

THE HAGUE, May 6, 1939.

Received May 11.

Pol. II 1611.

Subject: The Military Attitude of the Netherlands.

The Foreign Minister read me a letter yesterday from the Netherlands Minister in Berlin stating that a Dutchman called Jürgens met the Chief of the High Command of the Armed Forces at a wedding on April 24. In the course of the conversation on this occasion Colonel General Keitel is said to have spoken to this Dutchman somewhat as follows:

Whereas the Netherlands mobilization measures in September had been nearly equal on all sides, the military measures at Easter<sup>1</sup> had been directed much more against Germany than against Holland's other neighbours.

Moreover, these military measures had been taken as a result of pressure by Britain. The General had let it appear that he believed there were agreements, though perhaps rather loose ones, between the military authorities of Britain and of the Netherlands in the event of a war.

On this M. Patijn told me that, as I myself would probably know, the view that the Netherlands had protected their eastern frontier at Easter more strongly than the other frontiers was wrong. Equally, no pressure of any kind had been exerted by Britain. Moreover, he could once again assure me, on his word of honour, that there were no agreements or connections of any kind between any military authorities, even subordinate ones, in Britain and the Netherlands; further, that no exchange of information had ever taken place; indeed that Britain had never even made an attempt at military talks with the Netherlands—presumably because the British General Staff knew from the start that they would be met by a refusal from the Netherlands.

I told the Minister in reply that, from all I had heard, I too had the impression that the Netherlands had covered their frontiers equally on all sides at Easter. This opinion of mine, I told him, had been confirmed by the Air Attaché, General Wenninger, who during the days in question had several times and at various points crossed the Netherlands frontier. If it was believed by us here and there that Britain had brought pressure to bear on the Netherlands during the critical days of

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 263 and footnote 1 thereto.

March and April the Netherlands must blame the British press and its well-known sensational news for that. It had indeed often been stated here officially and with emphasis that the Netherlands had not entered into any kind of military commitments with Britain, and I believed these statements to be entirely accurate. But all the same the position was that, whereas in the event of war Netherlands neutrality would be to our advantage and would therefore be respected for as long as the Netherlands remained determined to resist any attack from whatever quarter, Britain undoubtedly had a military interest in the occupation of the Netherlands. I could, therefore, quite well envisage Britain in the event of a war trying by friendly means to gain possession of the Netherlands. Should she fail in that, however, I should indeed consider the Netherlands neutrality to be under grave menace from Britain.

The Minister again assured me, as he had already repeatedly done before,<sup>2</sup> that the Netherlands would defend themselves with all the means they possessed against any aggressor, from whatever quarter he might come. Indeed this had frequently been publicly stated by the Netherlands whilst alleged commitments with Britain had been denied. He much regretted that it had apparently not been possible to convince Colonel General Keitel of the sincerity of the Dutch declarations. In this connection the Netherlands Minister pointed out to me how dangerous agents' messages could be in the event of a war. He could well imagine that, if war should come, reports which sounded quite plausible, but which were without any foundation in fact, might convince the German General Staff that Britain was on the point of landing in Holland. Then Germany might possibly take preventive action just because, as with Colonel General Keitel in the present instance, she did not believe the Dutch.

In this connection the Minister also mentioned another quite interesting fact. He told me that it had been under consideration here whether a useful purpose might not be served by conducting certain preliminary military conversations with Belgium, who would be in a similar position to Holland in the event of war, conversations which from the political point of view would have been without much significance *vis-à-vis* a country like Belgium. But after mature consideration this had been rejected in order that it might be possible really to state in all truth that no military discussions of any kind had ever been conducted, directly or indirectly, with any neighbours.

Copy to the Military Attaché.

ZECH

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 93.

## No. 339

F9/0283-284

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOP SECRET

No. 187 of May 6

Tokyo, May 6, 1939—2 p.m.

Received May 6—2:15 p.m.

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 184 of May 4.<sup>1</sup>

Statements by various officers of the General Staff including my informant up to the present, who is working under direct instructions of the Minister of War,<sup>2</sup> and also conversations between the Vice Minister of War<sup>3</sup> and the Italian Military Attaché<sup>4</sup> yield the following picture of the views of the Army which I regard as official:

In the struggle at the Five Minister Conference (Minister of War and Finance Minister<sup>5</sup> versus the Foreign Minister<sup>6</sup> and the Minister of Marine<sup>7</sup>) the Minister President has achieved a compromise which the Army describes as being the maximum offer possible in the present situation. The Army's comments on the main points of the declaration are as follows:

1) With regard to the mutual assistance undertaking the Army had made a more far-reaching proposal to define more precisely the "change in circumstances" which would make effective help possible later and to state conclusively that neutrality on the part of Japan was out of the question. The Army attributed the present wording to the Foreign Minister. The Vice Minister of War stated that the alliance definitely bound Japan to the Axis Powers. We must, however, understand that in the Far East Japan was isolated and in a considerably worse position than the Axis bloc in Europe, which could work together directly. In the event of war, however, the mere fact of the alliance would exercise effective pressure on the enemy quite apart from the beginning and extent of military operations by Japan.

2) With regard to "interpretations" the Army emphasizes that the present proposal is more elastic, contains no expressly worded statement and leaves open the negotiations for which, according to Oshima's telegram received yesterday, the prospects are said to be favourable.

3) The statements on "the sincerity of my country" were described as a particularly important personal word of honour on the part of the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 326.<sup>2</sup> Lt.-Gen. Itagaki.<sup>3</sup> Lt.-Gen. Tojo.<sup>4</sup> Lt.-Col. Sealise.<sup>5</sup> Sotaro Ishiwata.<sup>6</sup> Hachiro Arita.<sup>7</sup> Admiral Yonai.

Minister President, after I had pointed out that the wording was ambiguous. As also appears from hints in the press, the whole statement had been submitted to the Emperor by the Foreign Minister. If the alliance does not materialize the Army expects the resignation of the Cabinet, which would be extremely unwelcome to it at the present juncture for reasons both of foreign and domestic policy.

So far it has not been possible to obtain statements from Navy circles. The chief opposition in the Navy apparently comes from Yamamoto, the Vice Minister of Marine.

A leading official of the Foreign Ministry, who is in particularly close contact with Ambassador Shiratori, sent me word personally that a deep cleavage of opinion had developed throughout the whole administration between the friends and opponents of the alliance. The situation was very grave and complex. The Minister President by personal initiative had secured a compromise statement which accepted the principle of an unrestricted alliance but yet imposed two important limitations on it. This attitude on the part of Japan was bound to surprise the Axis Powers who wanted unequivocal decisions, but it was the natural result of a lack of united leadership. If the negotiations failed, there was the danger of a Cabinet crisis with serious consequences.

The general impression is that a really energetic approach to the idea of an alliance would emphasize the tremendous difficulties and ...<sup>8</sup> earnestly hopes that Hiranuma's statement will offer the opportunity of definitely concluding the alliance.

OTT

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<sup>8</sup> Note on the original: "A word seems to be missing here."

## No. 340

2981/584308-09

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Consul General Wiedemann*

PERSONAL

BERLIN, May 6, 1939.

Sent May 8.

DEAR HERR WIEDEMANN: Thank you for your two letters of March 27<sup>1</sup> and April 17<sup>2</sup> which give a vivid account of your reception in San Francisco.

We are, of course, agreed that your activities should be limited to the administration of the Consulate General in San Francisco, of which, naturally, the cultivation of social relations, which appear quite promising in your case, is part. I am taking up this point because of the

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 222.

remark in your letter of April 17 according to which you had "come into indirect contact" with President Hoover and with Hearst. However, I do not take your letter to mean that you had, from your side, sought political discussions with these men.

Another point, not in your letter, but in the report to the German Embassy in Washington appended to the last letter,<sup>3</sup> occasioned me certain doubts. You write there that you had received a "communist picket". Naturally, it is hardly possible to lay down generally applicable principles in such a case. However, the reception of communist delegations is contrary to the practice of our foreign service. I know that, at other posts, such delegations can at most place their wishes in the letter-box of our Consulate or Mission.

Good wishes for success in your further work, and please give my regards to your wife.

Yours,

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed. See document No. 222, footnote 1.

[EDITORS' NOTE. The following two undated and unsigned memoranda, extant in the Foreign Ministry archives, would appear to have been prepared as briefs for Ribbentrop's conversations with Ciano in Milan on May 6 and 7; see also document No. 341.]

(i)

2180/471655-56

*"Subjects for discussion at the meeting between the Reich Foreign Minister and Count Ciano"*

[This memorandum bears the handwritten marginal note: "To Under State Secretary Woermann (the Reich Foreign Minister has the original) W[eizsäcker] [May] 4." For the memorandum drawn up by Mussolini on May 4 to serve as brief to Ciano, see Toscano: *Le Origini del Patto d'Acciaio*, pp. 143-144.]

*"I. State of the Treaty negotiations"*

- a) in the Triangle, Rome-Berlin-Tokyo
- b) in the Axis, Berlin-Rome.

II. *Conversations between the General Staffs* for the event of war are proceeding satisfactorily. Significant here, at least from the political point of view, is Italy's intention to play an active part only in the Mediterranean and the subsidiary theatre of war in Africa, but (with the possible exception of the Balkans) to remain passive on the Continent of Europe and leave the offensive to Germany. (Yet Italy is, for instance, very interested in Nice, but seems not even to be thinking of tying down large units of the French army on the Alpine front.) Pariani wants a swift and decisive success in the war, since the Italian



forces will presumably not hold out for long. But such a success can only be found in Europe and never in North Africa. This shows a serious Italian lack of logic and consistency.

III. *State of the agreements on war economy* for an emergency (see Annex 1) [not found].

The development of an adequate direct link between Germany and Italy besides the Brenner must be speeded up; the present transport situation is completely inadequate for an emergency.

IV. *Mediterranean policy*

a) Attitude of Turkey (British intrigues against Italy)

b) Attitude of Yugoslavia (German *désintéressement* in Croatia).

V. *Italian policy in the Near East* (see Annex 2) [not found].

VI. *Relations between Germany and Poland*

Italy should take part, to the best of her ability, in a policy of isolating Poland from all sides.

Italy must be prepared for a conflict between Germany and Poland.

Explanation of German policy in the Baltic area.

VII. *Special questions*

a) South Tyrol repatriation questions. (See Annex 3) [not found].

b) Italy's relations with Central and South America. (Further details of the treatment of the numerous Italians residing there would be interesting. Does Italy look after the Italian-South Americans with dual nationality, e.g., in Brazil, Argentina, etc.?)

c) Italo-German economic and financial questions (see Annex 4) [not found].

d) Press representatives in Rome and Berlin (see Annex 5) [not found]."

(ii)

FI10/325-35

*Observations on the Technicalities for Political Agreements with Italy*

TOP SECRET

I

In the event that only a pact of friendship without obligations of military assistance is contemplated, the attached Draft "A" might apply. This draft corresponds in the main with the draft recently drawn up for Spain, except for the clause in Article 1 about Austria and the Brenner frontier. In the event of war, this draft provides for so-called benevolent neutrality to the widest conceivable extent, and that without differentiating between wars of aggression or defence.

Nevertheless it is very doubtful whether the offer of such a treaty to

Italy would be advisable. Should the treaty be published, it would not result in a strengthening but rather in a weakening of the Berlin-Rome Axis, particularly in comparison with the obligations of mutual assistance entered into by Britain and France. Even if the treaty were not published it would be appraised by the Italians in this sense.

## II

In the event that, beyond a treaty such as that described under I, an agreement of military mutual assistance should be made, this would best be done in a secret treaty. One could also envisage a division of the treaty into an open and a secret part. But against this must be set that, if the terms of the treaty are published but do not contain clauses on military assistance, this would, as already set out under I, result in weakening German-Italian relations.

When making an agreement of military assistance the first thing will be to include sufficient safeguards to prevent Italian policy from bringing the *casus foederis* into play arbitrarily. As safeguards of this kind, the following possibilities might be considered:

(1) The military assistance obligations would require to be agreed, not as applying generally to all conceivable cases of war, but only to the case of a war in which England and France were the opponents of either Germany or Italy.

(2) The entry into force of the obligation under the alliance would, as is usual in all treaties of alliance, be made dependent on the other party suffering unprovoked attack. It is therefore important to lay down that such an attack must be by England and France, that is not only by either England or France, otherwise the *casus foederis* would equally operate were Italy to attack Britain, and were France, by virtue of her treaty relations with Britain, to enter the war in consequence of the Italian attack, and were France then to attack Italy.

(3) The clause on attack is not, in itself, sufficient for this purpose. The question as to who is an aggressor in a war is purely theoretical, and will become even more problematical in the future than it has always been in the past. Thus the other party, to whom the obligation to render assistance applies, acquires the chance of judging for himself whether he will accept the *casus foederis* as having arisen or not. On the other hand, through such a decision, if taken in a negative sense only after the outbreak of war, this party will incur the heavy odium of lack of fidelity to treaties. In practice, it will probably always so work out that Italy, if she decides to go to war against England and France, will make sure beforehand of the attitude of her ally. But it is politically important that this prior consultation should be laid down in the treaty as concretely as possible, and in such

a way that Italy is fully aware *a priori* that we are not prepared to accept the ultimate consequences of an Italian policy which we have not approved. The principle of consultation as laid down in the usual form in Article 2 of Draft A would have to be strengthened to this effect. The entry into force of the obligation under the alliance would have to be expressly made dependent on all political decisions and measures, which might have a bearing on causing a breach with Britain and France, having been taken in full agreement by both parties to the treaty.

(4) The most effective safeguard against an Italian policy leading to war with Britain and France, contrary to our own intentions, would be for the treaty of alliance to lay down simultaneously definite principles for the *material* aims of Italian policy, and naturally also for German policy. But in view of the situation this will not be possible. It should, however, perhaps be considered whether it would not serve our interests to come to some agreement in advance, at least about the tempo of the policies of each party to the treaty. One could imagine a clause which expresses in a suitable form that both parties, in the next two or three years, will adopt a political attitude that will endeavour to avoid as far as possible a breach with France and Britain. This could be put in the treaty, perhaps by stating that both parties are agreed in accepting that the ratio of military strength in Europe in the next years will develop further in their favour, and that they are determined to take this into account in conducting their foreign policy.

(5) Finally the treaty should be concluded for a limited period, perhaps for six years, and in such a way that, on the expiry of the said period, it is not extended automatically but only by a new agreement. A Draft B, embodying these points of view, is attached.

#### DRAFT A

##### *Article 1.*

The two Contracting Parties reaffirm their complete agreement that Austria will, for all future time, form an inseparable part of the German Reich and that the German-Italian frontier thereby established, as it runs at present, will be recognized by the Contracting Parties as final and inviolable.

##### *Article 2.*

The Contracting Parties will remain in continuous consultation, for the purpose of agreeing about their common interests, or questions of international politics affecting the general situation in Europe.

Should their common interests be endangered by international events of any kind, they will immediately consult together on measures to be taken for the protection of these interests.

*Article 3.*

Should the safety or other vital interest of one of the Contracting Parties be threatened from without, the other Contracting Party will afford the threatened party its political and diplomatic support, in order as far as possible to remove this threat.

*Article 4.*

Neither of the Contracting Parties will conclude treaties, or other agreements of any kind, with third Powers which may, directly or indirectly, be aimed against the other Contracting Party.

The Contracting Parties agree to inform each other of treaties and agreements affecting their own interests, which they have concluded, or will conclude in future, with third States.

*Article 5.*

Should either of the Contracting Parties become involved in hostilities with a third Power, the other Contracting Party will, in the political, military, and economic sphere, avoid anything which might be to the detriment of the other party, or to the advantage of the latter's opponent.

*Article 6.*

The Contracting Parties will agree, in special arrangements, on other measures designed to promote between their two armed forces a comradely relationship and the exchange of military experience.

*Article 7.*

This Treaty shall be ratified and the instruments of ratification will be exchanged as soon as possible in . . . . .

This Treaty shall come into force on the date of the exchange of instruments of ratification. Apart from Article 1, the validity of which is unlimited in time, the treaty will be valid for a period of five years, from the day of the exchange of the instruments of ratification. Should notice not be given by either Contracting Party a year before the expiry of the said period, then the duration will extend for another five years. And thus consecutively for the subsequent five year periods.

**DRAFT B**

*Articles 1-4 as in Draft A.*

*Article 5.*

Should either Contracting Party be attacked without provocation by France and Britain the other Contracting Party will render him assistance and support with all military forces.

In order to avoid possible differences of opinion in a given case as to whether the alliance obligations provided for in paragraph 1 have arisen, either Contracting Party will take decisions and measures which

might entail a breach with Britain and France only in full agreement with the other Contracting Party.

*Article 6.*

Should, contrary to their wishes and hopes of peace, the Contracting Parties find themselves threatened in the circumstances envisaged in Article 5, the Contracting Parties will agree in good time on their military measures for the purpose of cooperating together. In order to facilitate such agreement in a given case, the military commands of both parties will from now on be in continuous consultation and..... (Here should be inserted a formula to be provided by the High Command of the Wehrmacht, covering as precisely as possible contact with the Italian Command in a form corresponding to our military interests.)

*Article 7.*

The Contracting Parties undertake now that, in the event of a war jointly conducted in accordance with Article 5, they will only conclude an armistice or peace in full agreement with each other.

*Article 8.*

Should either of the Contracting Parties become involved in hostilities with a third Power without the *casus foederis* envisaged in Article 5 coming into force, the other Contracting Party will, in the political, military, and economic sphere, avoid everything which might be detrimental to the other party or to the advantage of the latter's opponent.

*Article 9.*

The Contracting Parties are both of the opinion that the ratios of military strength in Europe in the next years will develop further to their advantage, and that, in consequence, it is in their common interest to take this into consideration in the general conduct of their foreign policy.

*Article 10.*

The Contracting Parties pledge themselves to maintain the strictest secrecy regarding this treaty.

*Article 11.*

This Treaty shall be ratified and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged as soon as possible in.....

This treaty shall come into force on the day of the exchange of instruments of ratification and shall remain in force from then on for six years. The Contracting Parties will agree together in good time before the expiry of the said period about an extension of this Treaty.]

## No. 341

F10/307-311

*Unsigned Memorandum*

RM 32

BERLIN, May 18,<sup>1</sup> 1939.

THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, COUNT CIANO, IN MILAN ON MAY 6 AND 7, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

The following subjects were discussed;

1) It was agreed to conclude a German-Italian treaty of alliance immediately.<sup>3</sup>

The Italian Foreign Minister stated that Italy wished to have as long a period of peace as possible. Above all Italy wished, if possible, to avoid war during the next three years.

The Reich Foreign Minister informed Count Ciano that this Italian attitude coincided with the German views also.

2) Count Ciano declared that the Italian Government wished to continue to pursue a formal policy of friendship towards Britain, and in particular to maintain the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April 1938.<sup>4</sup> Italy, however, did not intend to make any further practical use of this formal friendship.

3) As concerns Franco-Italian relations, there has, according to Count Ciano, been no new development. There had merely been a few vague contacts with the French Ambassador, François-Poncet.<sup>5</sup> Italy would do nothing *vis-à-vis* France without first informing Germany. The Franco-Italian problem should be regarded less from the material than from the moral point of view. If the present state of tension continued there would certainly be war between Italy and France. Otherwise, thought Count Ciano, Italy would not be sufficiently respected by France.

Italy would prefer to conduct a Franco-Italian war alone. She would expect only supplies of material from Germany. Count Ciano added, however, that Italy would not provoke France at the present moment.

4) According to Count Ciano, Mussolini hoped gradually to reach relations of alliance with Spain and Hungary also.

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is printed here, at the date of the conversations, for the convenience of the reader. No evidence has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives to explain the delay in drawing up this record.

<sup>2</sup> For Ciano's record of these conversations see Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 428-431.

<sup>3</sup> The "Pact of Steel" was signed in Berlin on May 22. See document No. 426.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 182, footnote 7.

<sup>5</sup> See also Georges Bonnet: *Défense de la Paix, Fin d'une Europe* (Geneva, 1948), pp. 72-73, and Grigore Gafencu: *Derniers Jours de l'Europe* (Paris, 1946), pp. 170-171, for the statement that Gafencu had brought a message from Bonnet to Ciano when he arrived in Rome on Apr. 30.

Count Ciano mentioned that no prominent Italian personage would take part in the victory parade in Madrid<sup>6</sup> as it was desired to respect the feelings of Franco, who apparently wanted to take this parade alone.

5) If the present Yugoslav foreign policy were continued, Italy was prepared to respect the *status quo* of that country. But should a serious crisis in internal affairs come to pass there, a new situation would arise, and on its development would depend the policy to be pursued in the future.

6) Since the occupation of Albania, Greece had come completely into the Italian sphere of power. For instance, the island of Corfu could be subjected to machine gun fire from the Albanian mainland. The distance from the Albanian mainland to the fortifications of Corfu was only four kilometres.

7) It was agreed between the Reich Foreign Minister and Count Ciano that Bulgaria should be supported by the Axis Powers in every way.

8) The policy to be pursued by the Axis Powers towards Turkey, after the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish mutual assistance agreement,<sup>7</sup> was discussed at length and joint measures were considered. A further exchange of views on this subject was reserved.

9) Count Ciano stated that the Duce considered that, for an armed conflict, we must have our way clear over the Balkan States. These States must either agree to a disarmed neutrality or be occupied.

10) On the Polish question, Count Ciano stated that the Duce was not interested in it. Italy was ready at any time to act as mediator should Germany so wish. For the rest, Italo-Polish relations were correct but nothing more. On the question of whether the Western Powers would intervene in a conflict between Germany and Poland, neither the Duce nor Count Ciano had a final view.

11) It was agreed by the Reich Foreign Minister and Count Ciano that a *détente* should be brought about in political relations between the Axis Powers and the Soviet Union. Such a *détente*, however, should not be pushed too far, since it was the Duce's view that friendly relations with the Soviet Union were not possible for reasons of Italian domestic policy.

12) Count Ciano mentioned that recently Switzerland had been adopting a very hostile attitude towards Italy. The Duce had said that, for the time being, he did not intend to take any action, but that he would take note of this attitude.

13) Count Ciano again expressed the desire of the Italian Government that the 10,000 former Austrians in the South Tyrol, who were now

<sup>6</sup> On May 19. For the negotiations on the possibility of Göring attending the parade see vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 788-801.

<sup>7</sup> For the Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12, see Editors' Note on p. 483.

Reich German subjects and who were a source of constant unrest, should be evacuated. He emphasized that this was a special request by the Duce.<sup>8</sup> The Reich Foreign Minister promised Count Ciano to give this request his favourable consideration.

14) Count Ciano again stressed the necessity of increased supplies of coal to Italy, and also of machinery for the manufacture of artillery. The Reich Foreign Minister informed Count Ciano that he would personally intervene in favour of an increase in coal deliveries, and would also give favourable consideration to the request for supplies of machinery for the manufacture of artillery.

15) It was agreed to thank the Pope for his initiative<sup>9</sup> and at the same time to ask him to refrain from making an appeal to the five Powers. According to Count Ciano, the Duce refused to have any discussion of the Franco-Italian question at a conference.

Count Ciano mentioned that the Italian Government would cordially welcome a settlement between Germany and the Catholic Church.

16) Count Ciano said that in the Duce's opinion the motto for the future policy of the Axis Powers must be: "Toujours parler de la paix et préparer la guerre".<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 318 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 331.

<sup>10</sup> Following this meeting an official communiqué was issued in Milan, on May 7, which read: "In the conversations which took place here between the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, and the Foreign Minister of the Reich, Herr von Ribbentrop, yesterday and today, a close examination was made of the present general political situation. The perfect identity of views of the two Governments was once more established, and it was decided finally to define, in a formal manner, the relations between the two States of the Axis in a political and military pact. In this way, Italy and Germany intend efficaciously to contribute to and ensure the peace of Europe."

## No. 342

169/82594

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 215 of May 8

BUCHAREST, May 8, 1939—8 p.m.

Received May 8—11 p.m.

I. Foreign Minister Gafencu, who has returned from his circular tour, has emphasized that in all the capitals which he visited he made the same statements on Rumania's attitude: no alliances against Germany, and no dealings at all with Soviet Russia.

In Britain<sup>1</sup> they had held up to him the example of Turkey, who was prepared to come to an understanding with Russia, and recommended the same arrangement to him. He had firmly refused to do this.

<sup>1</sup> For Gafencu's conversations in London, Apr. 23-26, see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, chapter iv.



Gafencu had told Chamberlain and Halifax that from his conversation with the Führer and Chancellor he was firmly convinced that the Führer

1) did not want war, and

2) wanted an understanding with Britain. He had met with sympathy from the British statesmen, and Chamberlain had emphasized how much he himself still hoped for such an understanding. Chamberlain had also asked him to communicate his opinion personally to the British Opposition. From Attlee<sup>2</sup> and the Opposition statesmen, however, he had met with as little understanding for the German point of view and the attitude of Rumania as ... (group mutilated) had been the case in Paris. Nevertheless the Rumanian Government remained firm.

He had also been satisfied with the discussions in Rome and Belgrade.

II. In accordance with a previous arrangement the Turkish Government had invited him to pay an official visit to Ankara at once.<sup>3</sup> He would refuse, as, coming immediately after Potemkin's visit to Ankara,<sup>4</sup> it might be wrongly interpreted. On the other hand he would not be able to avoid today's visit from Potemkin, who was passing through Bucharest. The King was at Turnu-Severin today, and would not be available as far as Potemkin was concerned.

FABRICIUS

<sup>2</sup> Leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party.

<sup>3</sup> Gafencu visited Ankara June 12-14, 1939, and was received by President İnönü.

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 336.

## No. 343

1625/388711

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 171 of May 8

LONDON, MAY 8, 1939—9:59 p.m.

Received May 8—11:40 p.m.

Pol. II 1553.

With reference to my telegram No. 163 of May 4.<sup>1</sup>

I have received the following information from a reliable source on the counter proposals to the Anglo-Soviet pact of assistance which were delivered to the new Soviet Foreign Commissar, Molotov, by the British Embassy in Moscow:

The British Government adhere to their point of view that Poland and Rumania must themselves decide to what extent they desire Soviet

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 327.

help in the event of so-called aggression. The British Government have met the Soviet Government to the extent of agreeing that this assistance be given only if Britain and France should find themselves engaged in war in fulfilment of their commitments to render assistance. This concession is calculated to refute the Soviet objection that, should the occasion arise, Soviet Russia would have to come to the assistance of the neighbouring States, without France and Britain taking up arms themselves.

It can be seen from the very nature of this Soviet objection how suspicious is the attitude of Moscow towards the pact negotiations as a whole.

DIRKSEN<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Dirksen, who had been summoned to Berlin on Mar. 18 (see document No. 25, footnote 2), had returned to London on May 6.

### No. 344

174/135923

#### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOP SECRET

No. 192 of May 8

TOKYO, May 8, 1939—10 p.m.

Received May 8—4:30 p.m.

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 187 of May 6.<sup>1</sup>

Further details about the position of the negotiations:

I. My informant tells me that the resistance of the Navy to the latest version of "interpretations" of the alliance, allegedly sent from Berlin,<sup>2</sup> is expected to be overcome during the next few days.

II. The leading official of the Foreign Ministry mentioned in my previous telegram has again stressed the fundamental character of the cleavage between the friends and the opponents of the alliance, and urgently advised keeping the negotiations going in the interests of the Japanese supporters of the alliance and in spite of any disappointment which might be caused by the Japanese reservations. On the question of the "interpretations" he said that the intention was on publication simply to announce that the alliance represented a strengthening and a logical extension of the Anti-Comintern Pact, and to avoid any further commentary, especially in respect of the alliance's opponents. Thus, it is hoped, the impression will be created that the alliance is directed only against the Soviet Union.

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 339.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

III. Reports by representatives here of the British and American news agencies, to the effect that Japan refuses to be committed to an alliance against the democracies, arouse the suspicion that they foreshadow an interpretation of the alliance which would be undesirable for us, although it is not clear whether these reports originate from official Japanese circles or from the British and American Embassies here. I have told my Army informant that such attempts to cause trouble must have an unfavourable effect in Berlin and Rome, and I requested him to make appropriate intervention.

OTT

## No. 345

174/135924-25

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 399

BERLIN, May 8, 1939.

The Japanese Ambassador called on me this afternoon in order, if possible, to hear something from me about the projected German-Italian military pact, of which he could make use with his own country, and particularly in order to:

- a) encourage his friends to save the Three Power pact even now,
- b) combat the opponents of the Three Power pact, who were talking about a Milan sensation and German-Italian retreat into the Axis.

I told Oshima that he could report to Tokyo that it was really not surprising if, in face of the Anglo-French encirclement action, a forceful expression of our solidarity had become necessary. If some such proof of our solidarity had not been forthcoming, the meeting of the two Foreign Ministers would have sounded flat. Moreover German-Italian friendship was indeed so close and solid that the codification of this close relationship ought not to be looked upon as a sensation.

However, Oshima was insistent and wanted to know whether or not the tenor of the projected German-Italian pact was consistent with the text of the present Berlin-Rome-Tokyo draft treaty. If so, Tokyo could be included later on in the alliance as a third partner; if not, the anxieties of his Japanese friends were perhaps justified after all. Oshima obviously felt it important that the text of the German-Italian pact should not go beyond that of the aforementioned tripartite text.

In reply I told the Ambassador that, as far as I knew, the German-Italian text had not been finally drawn up. However, from the wording of the Milan communiqué<sup>1</sup> I would venture to expect a very far-reaching expression of our Axis friendship which was also founded on geography. Oshima would certainly be better able than I to judge whether the Japanese Government could adapt themselves to such a new

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 341 and footnote 10 thereto.

text. I regarded it as a matter of course that Oshima was continuing his work energetically in the same direction as before.

In conclusion the Ambassador asked to be given a clue as soon as possible which would enable him to keep his friends in the Government steadfast.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 346

2767/535873

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 53 of May 8

SOFIA, May 8, 1939—8:20 p.m.

Received May 8—11:40 p.m.

Pol. II 1568.

With reference to my telegram No. 52 of May 8.<sup>1</sup>

The Minister President asked me to come and see him today to tell me about the results of Potemkin's second visit. Whereas during his first visit the Foreign Commissar had only touched on general questions, he had this time sounded the King and him, the Minister President, about Bulgaria's readiness to accede to the Balkan Pact in return for the cession of Southern Dobruja. This had been declined, and he [the Minister President] had referred to his recent statement in the Chamber in which he had stated as Bulgaria's revisionist aims Dobruja and the 1913 frontier, that is Grecian Thrace.<sup>2</sup> As for the visit to Ankara, Potemkin had given the impression of being disappointed, because apparently Russia's proposal for Turkish help to Rumania in the form of a Turkish guarantee of Rumania's frontiers had been rejected by the Turks and all that had resulted had been a general affirmation of Russo-Turkish friendship. On the other hand, according to Potemkin, an Anglo-Turkish Mediterranean pact in the form of a mutual assistance pact had been concluded. When the Minister President asked if this also applied expressly to the Aegean, the Dardanelles and the Black Sea, the Foreign Commissar answered evasively by referring to these seas as "appendages of the Mediterranean". The Minister President gained the impression that the pact was chiefly directed against Italy. The Minister President denied Altinov's view of the purpose of Potemkin's visit to Ankara reported in my previous telegram<sup>3</sup> and said that it was his (Altinov's) personal opinion.<sup>4</sup>

BÜLOW

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5453/E366641). In this telegram Bülow briefly reported Potemkin's reception by the King and the Minister President on May 7.

<sup>2</sup> In a report of May 11 (not printed, 8007/E575718-21) Bülow gave Kiosseivanov's interpretation of his revisionist claims.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed; see document No. 320, footnote 4.

<sup>4</sup> The texts of this telegram and of Sofia telegram No. 50 (see above footnote 3) were repeated to London, Paris, Rome, Moscow and Ankara in a telegram of May 10 (not printed, 2767/535874).

## No. 347

1625/388721-22

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey*

Telegram

No. 114

BERLIN, May 9, 1939--3:20 p.m.  
[e.o.] Pol. II 1586.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 142, 145, 149 and 153.<sup>1</sup>

1) Information on the result of the conversations between the Reich Foreign Minister and Ciano on the Turkish question,<sup>2</sup> will not be available until some days after the Reich Foreign Minister's return.

2) In further conversations, please do not allow the impression to be created that there is any difference between German and Italian views on the question of the Balkan Pact. There will certainly be no question of the accession of Albania now bound to Italy by personal union. Nor have we any reason to force Bulgaria into the Balkan Pact against her will, especially as there seems to be no prospect of Bulgaria thereby receiving territorial concessions which correspond to her national aspirations. We have learned from a strictly confidential source that a report emanating from Paris is being circulated in Ankara, to the effect that Germany is playing off Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia against one another. Of course this is utterly false. It is, however, to our interest to regulate our relations with the individual States of the Balkan Entente directly. This policy has been successfully pursued in the recent conversations with Rumania and Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> The present British attempt to make the Balkan Entente the tool of a policy directed against Germany and to draw Bulgaria into this, must naturally meet with our opposition.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 315, 324, 333 and 336.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 341.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 227, 234, 262 and 271.

## No. 348

B21/B005047-48

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 162 of May 9

WASHINGTON, May 9, 1939--7:26 p.m.  
Received May 10--4:15 a.m.

The fall of Litvinov and the development of the Berlin-Rome Axis into a military alliance have had a very sobering effect here and have caused great confusion.

As is unanimously shown by the press today, the German-Italian military alliance has completely banished the ever-recurring fairy tale about differences of opinion between the Axis partners. Opinions differ regarding the effect of the alliance. Some commentators look upon its conclusion as being a confirmation of the predominance of Germany, who is now sweeping Italy along with her on the road to war. Others believe that, with the closer relationship between Germany and Italy, Mussolini will urge still more strongly than before the desire, with which he is credited, for a peaceful settlement of all European problems. In any case the opinion predominates that the political and military striking power of Germany and Italy has been considerably increased by the alliance.

It is realized that the new German-Italian agreements have demonstrated that Roosevelt's policy of driving a wedge into the Axis by means of favoured treatment for Italy has completely missed the mark. According to my information the State Department is extremely annoyed by this realization and wishes to withdraw more than hitherto from European affairs and to concentrate on the affairs of the western hemisphere. Since his peace appeal of April 15,<sup>1</sup> Roosevelt has made no further statement on matters of foreign policy. We must wait and see whether, after recent experience, he follows his advisers in the future more than he has done, and refrains from experiments in foreign policy in Europe. The fall of Litvinov also, who was regarded here as the leading exponent of a collective system directed against Germany, has certainly had a sobering effect in this respect.

In general the American press sees in this event a completely new orientation of fronts, and speculates with unbridled imagination on the new constellation which may result therefrom. The confusion has been further increased by Halfeld's article in the *Hamburger Fremdenblatt*<sup>2</sup> and the hint contained in it that ideological reasons do not necessarily stand in the way of an understanding between Germany and Russia. The press is so far only agreed on the fact that, since the Munich Agreement, Russia has returned to the European scene as a decisive factor, and that on her decisions depend not only the fate of Poland but substantially that of the Western Democracies also.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 200.

<sup>2</sup> This article had interpreted the fall of Litvinov as indicating the end of an era of ideological conflict and had welcomed the replacement of ideologists like Litvinov and Eden by political realists.

## No. 349

1625/388716

*The Ministry in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 217 of May 9

BUCHAREST, May 9, 1939—10:15 p.m.

Received May 10—12:30 a.m.

Pol. II 1570.

According to State Secretary Cretzianu, Potemkin, during his visit to Bucharest yesterday, made no offer to Gafencu. Nor was the question of a guarantee or assistance broached. On the subject of Potemkin's talks in Ankara he could tell me that Turkey considered her existing Treaty with Russia<sup>1</sup> to be sufficient and had made no new agreements.

Potemkin who, in order to avoid giving the visit an official character, had lunched with Gafencu and a very few other guests, had left for Warsaw in the evening. He was said not to intend stopping there.

The press takes no great notice of the visit.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> A Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression between Turkey and the U.S.S.R. was signed at Paris on December 17, 1925, and renewed for a further ten years on November 7, 1935. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 125, pp. 1001-2, and vol. 139, pp. 721-22.

## No. 350

908/294012

*The Foreign Ministry to the President of the Reich Labour and Unemployment Insurance Institute (Syrup) and the Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police (Himmler)*<sup>1</sup>

Express Letter

BERLIN, May 9, 1939.

e.o. Pol. V 1099 g.

As the oppression of the German community in Poland (arrests, deportations from Polish territory and from the border zone, maltreatment, damage to property), especially in the former Prussian provinces, is constantly increasing despite continual serious representations by the German Government, retaliation for such anti-German action by similar measures against Polish nationals and Reich nationals of Polish stock living in the German Reich is under consideration. I would be

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this letter was sent to the Reich Ministry of the Interior for observations, and copies were circulated for information to the Cultural Policy and Legal Departments in the Foreign Ministry.

grateful to hear from you, if possible immediately, whether you have any objection to such measures on economic or other grounds.<sup>2</sup>

By order:  
WOERMANN

<sup>2</sup> The Ministry of Labour in a letter of May 13 (not printed, 908/294134-36), and the Ministry of the Interior in a letter of May 15 (not printed, 908/294137-38), replied objecting to the expulsion or dismissal of Poles owing to the shortage of labour in the Reich. In a letter of May 23 (not printed, 908/294139) on behalf of the Reichsführer-SS, Heydrich described these measures as unlikely to be successful; it was intended to instruct the frontier police to enforce police regulations against Poles more strictly. In a minute of May 12 (908/294140) Lorenz of the Cultural Policy Department wrote as follows:

"Any counter measures to be taken against the Polish encroachments could, in our opinion, best be carried out in the immediate frontier zone, and represented to the world press in such a way as to make them appear to be frontier incidents, due to culpable action by the Poles from beyond the frontier.

"General measures against cultural and economic organizations of the Polish national group should, in our opinion, only be taken as a second resort, as our national group possesses ten times the number of such organizations."

## No. 351

103/111306

### *Minute by an Official of the Information and Press Department*

BERLIN, May 9, 1939.

The Counsellor of the Russian Embassy, Astakhov, called on me this afternoon in order to introduce to me the Tass representative, Filipov, who had just arrived. He began with the statement that he was happy that M. Filipov could start his work under new conditions, which were naturally different from what they had been in the past. The reserve recently practised by the German press towards Soviet Russia had indeed already attracted the attention of the foreign press also. I for my part remarked that at present, however, one could not talk about a corresponding Russian reserve towards Germany, and pointed to the latest broadcasts of the Moscow Radio. To this M. Astakhov remarked that Moscow was obviously still rather suspicious because they evidently did not yet know how this reserve should be interpreted; it might possibly be only a shortlived tactical manoeuvre. At any rate the Soviet Russians would be only too happy if such fears were unjustified.

Asked about the significance of the change in the direction of foreign affairs in Moscow, M. Astakhov declared that previously too, it had, after all, not been a question of a personal policy by Litvinov but of complying with directives generally laid down. Therefore, one could hardly speak of a reorientation of policy at present, particularly since Soviet Russian policy depended on that of others, and not least on that of Germany.

BRAUN v. STUMM



## No. 352

116/66595-97

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 403

BERLIN, May 9, 1939.

The Estonian Minister called on me this afternoon and, in connection with the draft pact of non-aggression communicated to his Government,<sup>1</sup> handed me the list of points enclosed herewith.

Point 1: This relates to the normal, i.e., approximately peace-time, exchange of goods with third parties, in the event of war between one treaty partner and a third State. The Minister said he took it that our proposed treaty certainly was not intended to break off the regular trade between Estonia and a potential enemy of Germany's. However, it was perhaps for consideration whether this should not be specifically mentioned either in an exchange of notes or final protocol.

I replied that of course we did not want to force Estonia into economic sanctions against our enemies. That was self understood, but we would, nevertheless, study this suggestion.

Point 2: This relates to an extension of the treaty after ten years. The Estonian proposal is more formal and might well be accepted. Though I did not promise the Minister this, I held out the prospect of favourable consideration.

Point 3: This relates to the Estonian-Latvian Treaty of Alliance,<sup>2</sup> the functioning of which Estonia did not wish to be prejudiced.

On this point I made the Estonian Minister the following reply: A clause of the kind proposed, if directed at third States (e.g. Russia or Poland), would be pointless, as such a conflict would not affect the proposed non-aggression pact. If, on the other hand, the Estonian proposal was designed to secure that Estonia should be permitted to fulfil her treaty obligations towards Latvia should Germany be at war with Latvia, then I could follow the theoretical basis of this argument, but, in practice, the case did not arise and it really would be to undermine morally and *ab initio* the non-aggression pledges proposed between Germany and the Northern States if we were already providing for the event of their being violated. Thus this suggestion seemed to me rather strange. I would certainly submit it to the Reich Foreign Minister, but must stigmatize it *ab initio* as hardly in very good taste.

Point 4: This contains the requirement of a sort of "most-favoured nation" treatment, namely that in the event of the other Northern States concluding a more far-reaching treaty with us, Estonia would

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 316.

<sup>2</sup> Signed at Tallinn on Nov. 1, 1923. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 118, pp. 242-243.

not wish her treaty with us to be less so. The Estonian Government would like to lay down this most-favoured nation treatment.

In reply, I told M. Tofer that it was our desire, if at all possible, to agree on an identical text with all the Northern States concerned, and to sign it on one and the same day. In this case, therefore, it would not be necessary to make any further most-favoured nation agreement. In principle, we were entirely at one with him, and had certainly no intention of granting to Estonia less than to, say, one of the other five States concerned.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum of even date, St.S. No. 404 (not printed, 115/117799-800), Weizsäcker recorded that, after this visit, the Latvian Minister had called on him and had presented what were in fact precisely the same observations, though arranged in a different sequence, and that he had made almost identical replies.

[Enclosure]

From the Estonian Minister

May 9, 1939.

Point 1: For the interpretation of the second paragraph of Article I the following will be set forth, either in the treaty or in notes to be exchanged on its signature:

"The normal exchange of goods and transit trade (or that corresponding to the approximate peace-time volume) does not come within the meaning of assistance as referred to in Article I, paragraph 2."

Point 2: The final sentence of paragraph 2, Article II, should be amended to read:

"Should neither of the two Contracting Parties have denounced the present Treaty six months before expiry of this period, the validity of the Treaty will be held to be extended for a further ten years."

Point 3: A new article should be added:

"Article III. The present treaty, in so far as Estonia is concerned, does not affect the obligations arising from the Estonian-Latvian Defensive Alliance of November 1, 1923."

Point 4: It should be set forth in a note that, should Germany, after signature of the treaty, grant amendments or additions to the draft treaty to Denmark, Norway, Sweden or Finland respectively, and should the Estonian Government deem their application to the Estonian-German Treaty desirable, the German Government declare themselves prepared, at the request of the Estonian Government, to apply these amendments or additions to the Estonian-German Treaty also. The Estonian Government must present the appropriate request within three months after publication of the said treaties.

## No. 353

121/119523-24

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 402

BERLIN, May 9, 1939.

The French Ambassador paid me his first visit today after his return from a stay of several weeks in France.<sup>1</sup>

We did not revert to our last, somewhat stormy, interview of March 18 after the Czech affair.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary M. Coulondre assured me that he had returned to Berlin to continue the task which he had set himself from the beginning, namely, that of working for pacification in Franco-German relations. Of course he no longer held the broken threads in his hands, and the March events had left M. Daladier, in particular, with a very bad taste in his mouth. However, he, Coulondre, would certainly do his best for Franco-German relations.

Turning to Poland, Coulondre enquired about the possibility of fresh German-Polish conversations. I tried to make it clear to the Ambassador that Beck's attitude was really very sterile. In his reply to us,<sup>3</sup> Beck had settled down on his throne like an oriental pasha and was leaving it to us to open conversations with him when we came round to his ideas. I could see no point of contact in such an attitude. The Führer had, after all, described his offer as one which would not be repeated. The behaviour of the demi-gods in Western Poland towards our *Volksdeutsche* seemed to me dangerous. Here incidents involving serious consequences might easily happen. When Coulondre interjected that France was warning Warsaw against such follies, I replied that, unfortunately, it seemed to me Warsaw was holding the reins very slackly and really not doing enough to prevent such incidents. The wisdom of the British Government in the last few weeks had not been very clear to me. The British guarantee to Poland amounted to handing the sugar to a naughty child before it had learnt sense.

Coulondre then assured me that France was of course resolved and ready for all eventualities, but in no way desirous of war, and referred to the Vatican's peace move<sup>4</sup> of which he knew very little even from Paris. The Ambassador did know, however, that the Nuncio had returned to Berlin very pleased with the treatment accorded him at Obersalzberg. About the tenor of his audience with the Führer, however, the Nuncio was preserving complete silence.

I answered the Ambassador that I preferred such discreet procedure to the methods of Mr. Roosevelt, who telegraphed all round the world

<sup>1</sup> He had been recalled to Paris on Mar. 19 (see document No. 25, footnote 2), and returned to Berlin on Apr. 26.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 20.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 334.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 331.

to the heads of foreign Governments and even published the text of his telegrams in advance.

The Milan pact<sup>5</sup> did not seem to disturb the Ambassador greatly. When asked about the text, I told him that details were still being drafted.

The Ambassador concluded his visit with the repeated assurance of his sincere intention to work towards a settlement.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 341.

### No. 354

5555/E395219-20

#### *The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 190

BERLIN, May 10, 1939—10:00 a.m.  
zu W 659 (g).<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 213.<sup>1</sup>

I. The report by Rumanian negotiators in Berlin that none of the military equipment available from the Protectorate can be given to Rumania is incorrect.<sup>2</sup> Naturally, officers who have come here prematurely without waiting to be invited by us must wait until the examination of the stocks of material is completed. This should be by the end of May. As a special concession, the High Command of the Wehrmacht have promised the Rumanians to inform them about the result of the examination if possible on May 15. It is, however, to be expected that, having regard to the extensive requirements of the German Army itself, possible deliveries will be on a small scale. It is already certain that mortars and military equipment (uniforms and harness) wanted by the Rumanians cannot be delivered. This is not in contradiction to Keitel's statement to Gafencu which mentioned only general willingness to send deliveries, but did not make promises in respect of any particular material.

II. The High Command of the Wehrmacht are as before endeavouring to comply with Rumania's desire for speeding up of current orders placed with Skoda and Rheinmetall, at least partially.

CLODIUS<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 337.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 183 to Bucharest of May 6 (not printed, 5555/E395216) it was stated that German representatives would be ready to negotiate in Bucharest on May 11 and that Göring had decided that at first an attempt should be made to offer Czech material.

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Please despatch. Initial will be obtained afterwards."

## No. 355

52/34776-8

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 97/9

BERLIN, May 10, 1938 [sic].

Received 10:30 a.m.

The aggressive belligerent mood of last week has given place to a more fatalistic frame of mind under the influence of Beck's speech,<sup>1</sup> though it has lost none of its determination to resist. Hostility to Germany remains unchanged and prevails in all circles. Policy is very much influenced by the Army, with whose ideas Beck now completely conforms. His speech has won him great popularity, even among the former opposition. To this the success of the speech in the democracies abroad has contributed; in diplomatic circles here, even those where scepticism about Poland previously prevailed, one finds appreciation of her present attitude.<sup>2</sup>

There are factors which as time goes on might exert some influence on the solidarity of the, at present, united front. The maintenance of mobilization in the long run represents a burden which it will be hard for the State and the national economy to bear. Trade is at a standstill; there is a heavy withdrawal of bank deposits: some branches of industry are slack; and the number of protested bills of exchange, for example in the Lodz industrial area, has doubled in the last month. Agriculture is being severely handicapped just during the spring cultivation period by requisitioning and the call-up of reservists. The morale of the reservists called up is described in various quarters as bad. To this must be added doubts as to whether British help would be effective and would arrive in time. It is not yet possible to see to what degree these factors will have any effect. At present only a few isolated voices dare to admit that it would have been wiser to have accepted the German offer. In general, public opinion is under the influence of official propaganda which treats even the smallest territorial concession as the beginning of the end for the independence of the State. Also, the military aspects of the Danzig question are given more prominence than before (the bastion against Gdynia).

The British Ambassador here called on me soon after my return.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On May 5 to the Sejm; for the text see the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 15, and the *Polish White Book*, No. 77.

<sup>2</sup> For the appraisal of Beck's speech by the British and French Ambassadors see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 386, and the *French Yellow Book*, No. 120.

<sup>3</sup> Moltke went on leave to Berlin on Apr. 8 and returned to Warsaw on May 6. For Sir Howard Kennard's account of his interview with Moltke, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 417.

and showed great interest in the possibility of further negotiations. I replied in accordance with your instructions.<sup>4</sup> At bottom Kennard did not seem entirely satisfied with the course which events had taken as a result of the British move, and also had to admit in the end that Beck's peculiar remark about the pointlessness of the German frontier guarantees<sup>5</sup> would not have been conceivable before the Anglo-Polish Agreement had been concluded.

The attitude of Poland has recently been greatly influenced by the events in Moscow. Litvinov's dismissal has made a very great impression here. Apparently Beck's speech was toned down at the last minute on that account. The desire to show goodwill towards the Soviet Government is proved by the prompt issue of the *agrément* to an appointment to the post of Soviet Ambassador here, which has been vacant for one-and-a-half years, and the ban on the commemoration of the Polish march on Kiev. Also Potemkin's return journey via Warsaw,<sup>6</sup> probably not originally planned, seems to point to Polish initiative. Poland's anxiety lest Moscow should completely withdraw from the ranks of the encirclement Powers will still prove to be stronger than aversion to closer collaboration.

MOLTKE

<sup>4</sup> No record of these instructions has been found.

<sup>5</sup> In his speech on May 5 Beck had said: "In his speech the Chancellor of the Reich proposes, as a concession on his part, the recognition and definite acceptance of the present frontier between Poland and Germany. I must point out that this would only have been a question of recognizing what is *de jure* and *de facto* our indisputable property. Consequently, this proposal likewise cannot affect my contention that the German *desiderata* regarding Danzig and a motor road constitute unilateral demands."

<sup>6</sup> Potemkin arrived in Warsaw on May 9 and continued his journey to Moscow the next day. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 427 and 457.

## No. 356

2856/563412

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 406

BERLIN, May 10, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1228.

I asked the Swedish Minister to call on me today in order to tell him the following: the Swedish Government had so far made no reply to the German suggestion for the conclusion of a German-Swedish non-aggression pact.<sup>1</sup> In the meantime some ten to twelve days had elapsed. The Swedish press had diligently employed this interval for polemics which, in our mutual interest, had better not have taken place. I should like to know what attitude the Swedish Government meant to adopt, as we intended to bring the various non-aggression pacts, now under consideration, to a conclusion forthwith.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 284.

The Swedish Minister proved to have no information.

I then continued that, if the Swedish Government were willing to accept our suggestion, we should naturally welcome this. If, on the other hand, they wished to reject our proposal, we would take note that, in view of our mutual relations, they did not consider the conclusion of a pact of non-aggression to be necessary. Moreover the question we put was so simple that a prompt answer—in the affirmative or the negative—could surely present no difficulty to the Swedish Government.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 357

2886/563413

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 407

BERLIN, May 10, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1229.

The Danish Minister, whom I had also invited to call on me this afternoon, personally expects—although he has no instructions—to receive directions today or tomorrow to assent in principle to the projected German-Danish non-aggression pact.<sup>1</sup> M. Zahle intimated that he expected a negative attitude on the part of Sweden and Norway; from Finland, on the other hand, and from his own Government a positive response.

I arranged with M. Zahle that on receiving an assent in principle I would at once transmit to him the text of our draft. Also, I allowed M. Zahle to have a look at our draft.

In the course of the conversation I received the distinct impression that M. Zahle and, as he indicated, his Government also, attached no value to a simultaneous act of signature on the part of Denmark, Finland, Estonia and Latvia. With the four Scandinavian States split up into two groups—participants in the pact and non-participants—the Danish Government would obviously not like to be lumped together, by some public act, with the Baltic States, upon which, as is well known, the Scandinavian kingdoms always rather look down.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 284.

## No. 358

2886/565404-05

*The Minister in Denmark to the Foreign Ministry*

Letter Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 38 of May 10

COPENHAGEN, May 10, 1939.

Received May 11—7:35 a.m.

Pol. VI 1212.

To be submitted at once to the competent official.

With reference to my report No. 8A of May 5<sup>1</sup> and your telegram No. 72 of May 6.<sup>2</sup>

I. According to information from the Foreign Ministry, the Foreign Minister is very disappointed at the negative outcome of the Stockholm conversations.<sup>3</sup> The opposition of the other Scandinavian countries to the non-aggression treaties with Germany proved much stronger than he had expected. The driving force was Sandler, who felt himself committed by the attitude of out-and-out rejection adopted by the Swedish press. Erkko, originally more positively inclined, allowed himself to be brought around, because he wished to avoid prejudicing the relations of close friendship existing with Sweden.

The principal objections raised by Sandler to the text of the German-Estonian treaty are said to be the following :

1) Its limited duration, as a result of which Germany would not be hindered from attack after 10 years :

2) Doubt whether a non-aggression treaty is in keeping with the existing neutrality of the Scandinavian countries ; if it is, it would be superfluous ; if not, it would be unacceptable to Scandinavia :

3) The obligation not to support Germany's opponents might be interpreted to mean that, in the event of war, the Scandinavian countries could only make deliveries to Germany, and not to Germany's opponents as well :

4) The conclusion of a non-aggression treaty with a Great Power would encroach upon the sovereignty of the Scandinavian countries.

Munch disputed these arguments, and stressed in particular the importance of safeguarding neutrality by treaty, but did not carry the day.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2886/565400-01). In this report Renth-Fink discussed the forthcoming Stockholm Conference; see footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5455/E366649). In this telegram Woermann informed the Legations at Oslo, Stockholm and Copenhagen that the Finnish Minister had, at his own request, been given a draft treaty, similar to the German-Estonian draft (see document No. 316), and had been assured that in the German view the signature of such a pact would not contradict but rather strengthen Finland's policy of neutrality.

<sup>3</sup> On May 9, the Foreign Ministers of the four Northern States had met to discuss their attitude to the German offer of non-aggression pacts (see document No. 314, footnote 5). For the communiqué issued after this meeting, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 467.



II. The matter will be discussed in the Danish Foreign Affairs Committee today, and in the Norwegian tomorrow. After that a further exchange of views between the four Scandinavian Foreign Ministers is contemplated, so that the answer may presumably be expected at the end of this week.

Denmark is faced with the question of whether to accept the German suggestion on her own, thereby causing a rift in Scandinavian cooperation.

It cannot yet be said whether the Government will be able to overcome the considerable misgivings still existing here about such a Danish excursion. It is possible that a compromise will be reached in that, before a reply is given, the German Government will be asked to elucidate doubtful questions.

RENTHE-FINK

## No. 359

115/117504

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 410

BERLIN, May 10, 1939.

The Latvian Minister called on me again today,<sup>1</sup> to make the following statements regarding the Latvian (and also the Estonian) desire for a reservation in the projected non-aggression pact with reference to the Latvian-Estonian Treaty of Alliance:

The Latvian suggestion was not founded on any kind of mistrust, but Latvia had a Non-Aggression Pact with Russia dating from February 5, 1932.<sup>2</sup> This Non-Aggression Pact contained, as Article 3, a general reservation regarding earlier Latvian treaty obligations towards third States. If we were to refuse such a clause, the Russians would draw conclusions unpleasant for Latvia. The Estonian-Latvian Treaty was, however, for Latvia, the basis of her whole foreign policy. She must not undermine it in any way.

I replied to the Minister that I had not known of the precedent he had mentioned, namely the Latvian reservation *vis-à-vis* Soviet Russia; on that basis the Latvian desire became more intelligible. I accordingly adopted a more positive attitude towards the matter today than yesterday, and would pursue it further.

The Latvian Minister then added that it would be preferable if the reservation proposed by him expressly mentioned the Latvian-Estonian Treaty of Alliance rather than that it should be couched in the general form of Article 3 of the Latvian-Russian Treaty of February 5, 1932.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 352, and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this Treaty see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 135, pp. 638-640.

## No. 360

2052/447985-38

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 3755

ROME, May 10, 1939.

In accordance with instructions given me by the Reich Foreign Minister on May 6, 1939, at Milan.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: German coal deliveries to Italy.

Records in my possession and quoted in detail in my reports, give, in an abridged form, the following picture of German coal deliveries to Italy:

As early as 1938 the quantities contracted for were not delivered by Germany.

In the German-Italian Trade Agreement of February 13, 1939,<sup>2</sup> deliveries to the amount of 9,200,000 tons for the year 1939 were agreed upon.

Actual deliveries in the current year, according to Italian data,<sup>3</sup> are:

January 1939	368,454 tons
February 1939	440,835 tons
March 1939	551,554 tons
April 1939	460,000 tons (provisional figures)

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1,820,843 tons

To reach the yearly amount agreed upon, Germany would have to deliver about 765,000 tons per month. Consequently, on May 1, Germany was in arrears with deliveries by one million tons of coal.

According to information given to me and to the Commercial Attaché of the Embassy, the question of German coal deliveries will be gone into thoroughly by the Italians at the conversations, arranged to take place in Berlin from May 15 onwards, between delegations led by Minister Clodius and Ambassador Giannini.<sup>4</sup>

Understanding is shown by the competent Italian authorities for the delivery difficulties with which Germany was faced in the autumn of last year, the effects of which were felt up to February of this year. It has, however, caused some unpleasant surprise that, after the agreements of February 13, the deliveries for March were still inadequate, and that in April the deliveries were reduced still more, as a result of which the Italian supply position and the German-Italian balance of payments became problematic.

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 341.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 451.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 62, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> Head of the Commercial Department in the Italian Foreign Ministry.

In my opinion, by a close check up on Germany's coal deliveries to third countries, and on the amount required for home use, larger quantities of coal should currently be made available for export to Italy, thus making it possible to give the Italian Government assurances of deliveries which must then definitely be carried out.<sup>5</sup>

V. MACKENSEN

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 265 of May 27 (not printed, 2058/447941) Clodius informed Rome that the negotiations had been concluded with a certain measure of success. Agreement had been reached on the following points: monthly delivery of 755,000 tons of coal; the 1937 basis for Italian trade with the Protectorate; the transfer of journalists' salaries; monthly transfers of 40,000 RM for the Cultural Institute; 700,000 RM for the Embassy and 15,000 RM for the building of a school in Milan. The question of the Foreign Exchange Clearing Balance [*Devisenspitze*] remained open, Italy reserving the right to take it up again.

### No. 361

7261/E532763

*Senior Counsellor Bergmann to Consul General Janson*

BERLIN, May 10, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON JANSON: While with the State Secretary on May 8, President of the Senate Greiser spoke, amongst other things, about Professor Burckhardt. The State Secretary told Herr Greiser that if Burckhardt is retained in his post by the League of Nations and sent back to Danzig, we would, in his view, raise no objection, but, on the other hand, he would not consider it proper to influence Burckhardt now about his return to Danzig.

In the matter of the visit of German warships to Danzig this summer,<sup>1</sup> the Foreign Ministry's liaison officer with the High Command of the Wehrmacht has meanwhile ascertained that the visit of a considerable number of German ships to Danzig, which was discussed during the Führer's reception in Munich on February 24, is a special matter, issue of orders on which the Führer has reserved to himself for a special moment. The visit of the cruiser *Königsberg* to take part in the 25th

<sup>1</sup> The first reference to such a visit which has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives occurs in a memorandum by Bergmann dated May 8 (8273/E588188) which reads: "I had the opportunity a few days ago and again today of speaking to President of the Senate Greiser on the question of the visit of German warships to Danzig during this summer. President Greiser told me that the Führer during the 'Führer Reception' at Munich on February 24, 1939, stated that this year Danzig would be visited by a considerable number of German warships; he was thinking of about three fairly large units, a destroyer squadron, a submarine flotilla, and escort vessels. President Greiser had the impression that, with such a visit of warships, a foreign policy demonstration was intended. In these circumstances it does not appear to Political Division V feasible now to make arrangements in Danzig merely for a visit of the cruiser *Königsberg*, rather it should in the first place be made clear departmentally to what extent, in view of the changed German-Polish relations, German warships should visit Danzig this summer."

This memorandum was submitted through the Deputy Director of the Political Department to the Under State Secretary with a request for instructions.

anniversary memorial service for those lost from the cruiser *Magdeburg*, to be held at the cemetery in Danzig on August 25, is to take place independently of this. Instructions on this will reach you by the next courier.<sup>2</sup> But perhaps you will be so kind as to inform President of the Senate Greiser also of the above.

Best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours,

BERGMANN

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 378.

### No. 362

1625/888725-27

#### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 173 of May 11

LONDON, May 11, 1939—2:07 p.m.

Received May 11—3:45 p.m.

Pol. II 1616.

Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons yesterday,<sup>1</sup> regarding the deadlock in Anglo-Russian negotiations, attempts, as does the attitude of today's morning press, to create the impression that the "misunderstanding" which has arisen has been due solely to Russian concern lest, in case of a crisis, the Soviet Union would have to act alone, and without Anglo-French help, against Germany in defence of Poland. Since, on behalf of Britain, Halifax yesterday gave the Soviet Government reassuring explanations on this point,<sup>2</sup> it is further intended to create the impression that existing difficulties have been entirely cleared away. The continuing fundamental divergences of opinion in the negotiations have been kept completely dark by Chamberlain. These consist in:

1) the Soviet Government's objection that, for the services demanded of them, no appropriate *quid pro quo* is being offered; i.e., that when called on they would have to fight for Poland and other countries, whilst, in the case of attack by Japan, they could not count on assistance;

2) the insistence by the Soviet Union on the conclusion of a full military alliance with Britain and France. The British public have not yet been made to face a clear decision on this question. The British Government would themselves also like to postpone the decision on this as long as possible, because

a) in political circles here, many shrink from such a far-reaching alliance,

<sup>1</sup> See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 347, cols. 453-455.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. 7, No. 433.

b) by the conclusion of such an alliance Japan might be driven into joining the German-Italian Pact, a development which it is desired to prevent if possible, especially as just now a certain estrangement between Japan and the Axis Powers is believed to be apparent.

Although the further course of the Anglo-Russian negotiations cannot yet be foreseen, it can be assumed that, even if the fundamental Anglo-Russian differences fail to be bridged, an agreement of lesser importance will be concluded. Seen from here the negotiations are already too far advanced, and the expectations of the public too great, to permit the British Cabinet to expose itself without more ado to the set-back which a conspicuous break-down of negotiations would involve.<sup>3</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>3</sup> The text of this telegram was repeated on May 12 and 13 to the principal German Missions abroad (1625/388728-30).

## No. 363

174/135928

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 197 of May 11

Tokyo, May 11, 1939—6:50 p.m.

Received May 11—2:30 p.m.

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 192 of May 8.<sup>1</sup>

I. The War Minister informed me today through the General at the head of the Central Department<sup>2</sup> that he was at present fighting with great energy to overcome the remaining opposition from the Navy to as far-reaching a formulation as possible of alliance commitments, and earnestly hoped that Germany would be patient a little longer. He described the following as the main reasons for the opposition from the Navy:

1. The fear of America joining Britain in the event of war.
2. The Navy's traditional jealousy of the Army.

My informant referred to experiences, particularly in operations in Central China and against Hainan, which had shown that when combined operations were in progress, the Navy, for reasons of prestige and in order not to yield pride of place to the Army, went beyond the objectives and wishes of the Army. It was therefore to be expected

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 344.<sup>2</sup> General Machijiri.

on this occasion also that the Navy, if won over, would at least not lag behind the Army in the event of war.

II. A short time before, the Minister President had sent me a message through his Private Secretary, emphasizing his personal word of honour contained in the declaration<sup>3</sup> and expressing his earnest hope that the Führer would show understanding for Japan's special position.

The general impression of the last few days is that advocates of the idea of an alliance are much afraid that Germany may break off negotiations.

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 326.

## No. 364

22/13369

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Norway*

Telegram

No. 56

BERLIN, May 11, 1939.<sup>1</sup>  
e.o. Pol. . . .

It is reported from a reliable and strictly confidential source that some little time ago the Norwegian Foreign Minister replied to a question by the British Minister<sup>2</sup> that he considered it probable that in the event of war Germany would address a demand to Norway to place some point of Norwegian territory at her disposal. In answer to the question what reply he would give to such a demand the Norwegian Foreign Minister said that he knew exactly how his answer would run, but that he did not wish to make any statement about it. It is learned from the same source that the British Minister in Oslo would not be sorry to see German action of this kind against Norway, because it would bring Norway on to the side of Britain and would thus secure Britain a base in Norway.

There can be no question of making use of this information, on account of the confidential nature of the source. However, it is left to you to warn the Foreign Minister in appropriate form, when the opportunity presents itself, against any attempts at incitement coming from the British, which could only serve to further the pursuit of their transparent aims. A good starting-point could be made out of the lecture which Koht, according to the DNB of May 11, gave on "Norway and the foreign political situation", and wherein he passes censure on attempts at inciting the Norwegian people against Germany by means of baseless rumours.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Cecil Dormer.

## No. 365

8004/E575677

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, May 11 [1939].

Telephonic instructions to the Legation at Copenhagen.

The following replies are to be made to Sandler's four objections<sup>1</sup> to the text of the treaty.

To 1). Provision is made for a possible prolongation of the treaty. We are also ready in the absence of any denunciation to allow it to run on automatically.

To 2). A non-aggression treaty is in perfect harmony with Scandinavian neutrality. In addition it confirms and strengthens it.

To 3). An obligation not to support Germany's enemies of course does not mean that normal trade with our opponents in war has to cease and that we should wish to induce our treaty partners to adopt economic sanctions against other States. We are ready to lay down this self-evident interpretation.

Point 4), in the event of real neutrality on the part of the Scandinavian States, is nonsensical. Non-aggression undertakings by the Scandinavian States cannot prejudice their sovereignty.

All these arguments, therefore, are untenable. You are authorized to put forward our counter arguments in appropriate form in the Foreign Ministry. You are, however, requested to avoid conveying the impression that we are approaching Denmark as petitioners in this question and that we are running after Denmark.

## II

## TELEPHONIC INSTRUCTIONS TO THE LEGATION AT HELSINKI

Information about Sandler's objections (without mentioning the source) and about our counter arguments. In the case of Finland there is the additional point that she has concluded a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> Here too it holds good, that we have no reason to approach Finland as a petitioner in this matter.

GR[UNDHERR]

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 358.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 330 and footnote 3 thereto.

## No. 366

2826/565409

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, May 11, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1219.

Minister von Renthe-Fink, Copenhagen, has just informed me at 6 p.m. by telephone of the following:

At the Foreign Ministry he had made use of the arguments with which we had supplied him today by telephone.<sup>1</sup> The Danes had been grateful for this. He had been able to note a certain change in the situation; the Danes thought that it might perhaps be possible after all to induce the other Scandinavian States to conclude an agreement. Recently they had special hopes of Norway and then of Finland. Copenhagen's tactics were to gain time.

Yesterday's conversation between State Secretary Freiherr von Weizsäcker and Minister Zahle had impressed Copenhagen.<sup>2</sup> Zahle was returning to Berlin tomorrow and would give us a frank account of the situation. It was hoped that we would give the Danes a little more time. The Danish view was that it would be desirable, at first, for Norway and Finland in particular not to adopt a negative attitude towards us but rather to leave the door open, so that, if the German-Danish negotiations went well, they could after all conclude an agreement later.

VON GRUNDHERR

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 365.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 357.

## No. 367

2821/548775-76

*Circular of the Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup>*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, May 11, 1939.

zu. Pol. V 3303.<sup>2</sup>

For a long time the oppression of the German community in Poland, especially in the former Prussian Provinces, has increased in all spheres of life in consequence of an intensified campaign of hatred carried on by the greater part of the Polish press and a number of anti-German organizations, in spite of repeated serious representations by the

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees of the circular here printed were the principal German Missions in Europe, except Warsaw and Moscow, the Embassies at Ankara, Tokyo and Washington and the Consulates at Geneva and Danzig.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to an earlier draft of a circular on these lines, drawn up as a telegram dated Apr. 17, but which is marked as not sent (not printed, 2821/548773-74).



German Government. From the attitude of the Polish Government it must be concluded that they are neither seriously willing, nor do they appear to be in a position, to prevent this development. As the newspapers of the German community in Poland are prevented by strict censorship from fully reporting such anti-German excesses, apart from DNB, reports by the German Consular representatives in Poland are the only reliable sources of information for judging the real situation of the German community there.

Transmitted herewith are copies of a number of such reports of anti-German incidents and measures,<sup>3</sup> which, in future, will be regularly forwarded for information and with the request that this material should be used, in a manner which appears appropriate, with the Government to which you are accredited and also with the press.

By order:  
WOERMANN

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7638/E545474-649).

## No. 368

2791/547927

*Counsellor of Legation Selzam to Ministerialdirektor Wiehl*

CONFIDENTIAL

LONDON, May 11, 1939.  
W VI 1750.

DEAR WIEHL: I would like to inform you briefly that Mr. Henry Drummond-Wolff<sup>1</sup> left for Berlin again yesterday. The visit is as before a purely private one but it is being undertaken with the knowledge of the Prime Minister's closest economic advisers. Drummond-Wolff intends to visit you.

He informed me in confidence that shortly before his departure he again saw Sir Horace Wilson, with whom he had quite a long conversation. He also told me in confidence that, in continuance of the conversations which he had conducted at the time in Berlin, Oliver Stanley had intended to bring up, during the visit to Berlin then proposed,<sup>2</sup> the question of a partial renunciation by Britain of the most favoured nation rights in the Balkans in favour of Germany. He said he knew this for a fact.

As Drummond-Wolff told me the above in confidence I would be grateful if you would not give him any indication that you are aware of it.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

SELZAM

<sup>1</sup> Conservative M.P. for the Basingstoke Division of Hampshire 1934-1935. In a confidential letter to Wiehl of Jan. 5, 1939 (not printed, 2005/442811-13) Selzam had stated that Mr. Drummond-Wolff would be arriving in Berlin the following week and staying there for some time and had added details of his activities and political connections.

<sup>2</sup> The projected visit of the President of the Board of Trade was cancelled following the occupation of Prague. See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 330.

## No. 369

2180/471669-70

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 189 of May 12

ROME, May 12, 1939—5:45 p.m.

Received May 12—8:40 p.m.

For the Foreign Minister.

During a court function for Prince Regent Paul<sup>1</sup> yesterday evening, Ciano asked me whether I had already received further news from Berlin in connection with Milan.<sup>2</sup> He said that he had just telephoned Attolico but had merely heard from him that the return of the Reich Foreign Minister to Berlin was still being awaited. I replied that I too was still without news, but that I could scarcely have expected any yet. However, I did know, from my last conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister at Como, what importance the latter also attached to speeding matters up. On every occasion [*sic*]<sup>3</sup> he had held out the prospect that the draft would be forwarded in a few days' time. Ciano said that about the 22nd or 23rd seemed to him the most appropriate date for signature in order not to come too close to the visit of the Yugoslav Prince Regent to Berlin.

When I enquired whether he had had further suggestions to make regarding the actual substance of the treaty, Ciano replied that he attached decisive importance to two things only:

1) In any case the word "alliance"<sup>4</sup> would have to appear in the text.

2) The wording would have to be as full as possible.

Less important to him was whether it was proposed to have a brief [lapidare] agreement with a correspondingly important preamble or a detailed treaty. Detailed military stipulations would in any case of course have to be made the subject of a secret agreement.

In conclusion he added that one might indeed consider using as a basis the familiar paper which had been the subject of discussions between the Reich Foreign Minister and himself in Rome last October.<sup>5</sup>

MACKENSEN

<sup>1</sup> The Prince Regent of Yugoslavia and his consort paid a State visit to Rome, May 10-13.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the meeting between Ciano and Ribbentrop on May 6-7. See document No. 341.

<sup>3</sup> The Rome draft of this telegram (8002/E575668-69) reads: "on that occasion".

<sup>4</sup> In French in the original.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 400.

## No. 370

2180/471671-72

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

St.S. No. 419

BERLIN, May 12, 1939.

I informed the Italian Ambassador today that the Foreign Minister, who is indisposed and still in Munich,<sup>1</sup> would like to see him, as soon as possible, to hand him the draft of our Treaty of Alliance, which is now being drawn up. The Foreign Minister would probably ask him to come and see him tomorrow, Saturday, after having perhaps previously spoken as a matter of courtesy to Ambassador Oshima.

Attolico displayed a strong desire to receive our text of the treaty as soon as possible, as according to his telephone conversation with Count Ciano no text has been drawn up in Rome, indeed there were only some general ideas about the treaty's contents.

Before actually being presented with the document Attolico wanted to be able now to enlighten Rome on at least the main points and he went on to quote from memory what the gist of the treaty must be. Naturally, on the preamble, he came back to the question of the Brenner frontier and mutual respect for our vital interests, an idea which, he said, Ciano had also taken up. (Here I told Attolico that Count Ciano had not spoken about it to the Foreign Minister.) Attolico also mentioned again that, in his view, the word "alliance" might very well feature in the treaty. The defensive character of the whole treaty and its significance in promoting peace must be underlined. It would also be well to include reciprocal consultation on military and military-economic matters besides an article dealing with political consultation.

I promised Attolico to pass on at once his request to see the Foreign Minister soon after the latter's return.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 325, footnote 4.

## No. 371

2180/471673-75

*Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 12, 1939.

This afternoon as instructed, I handed Signor Attolico, on behalf of the Foreign Minister, the German draft of a German-Italian

fact.<sup>1</sup> In doing so I stated that the Foreign Minister considered that the draft corresponded completely with what he and Count Ciano had recently agreed, and that therefore it presumably did not require any more actual negotiations on the final version.

I translated our draft cursorily into French for Signor Attolico at his request. He thereupon gave me to understand that he thought the draft excellent, but he then came back again to the two points he had already brought up in conversation during the Italian visit; namely an historic mention of the Brenner frontier and the agreement of either party on respecting each other's spheres of interest. He stressed that this was not a matter of his own views but quite definitely the wish of the Duce and Count Ciano. On the Italian side too it was thought that these two points could no longer be made the subject of an article in the Pact as had once been planned in Rome for the Brenner frontier. But the two points could be referred to as an historical fact in the preamble; this could easily be done without endangering the impression made by the Pact upon the outer world. He, Attolico, would be glad if we could present him with an appropriate formula so that Rome should not be placed in the position of putting a proposal forward.

I treated these observations with great reserve indicating that Count Ciano had not, to my knowledge, mentioned anything about such Italian desires to the Foreign Minister, and that surely a strange impression would be created if, after the historic declaration by the Führer in Rome,<sup>2</sup> the question of the Brenner frontier were still to be receiving

<sup>1</sup> The draft is not attached to this memorandum. But on the same day Woermann wrote to Mackensen (2180/471663-68) sending him on Weizsäcker's instructions a draft of the pact for his personal information only, and adding that since the negotiations with the Italian Government on this text were to be conducted exclusively in Berlin, it would be proposed that Ciano should come to Berlin from May 21 to 24, but this was still to be kept secret. The draft as transmitted was identical with the text as finally signed (see document No. 426), except for differences in the preamble and in article 7 suggested by the Duce (see document No. 386). In the draft the second and third paragraphs of the preamble read: "They [Germany and Italy] reaffirm their common policy, the principles and objectives of which have been laid down by them already, and which has proved successful, both for promoting the interests of the two countries, and also for safeguarding peace in Europe."

"Firmly united by the inner affinity between their ideologies and the comprehensive solidarity of their interests, the German and Italian nations are resolved in future also to act side by side and with united forces for the realization of their eternal rights to life [*Lebensrechte*] and to maintain peace."

Article 7 of the draft reads: "This Pact enters into force immediately upon signature. The two Contracting Parties are determined to maintain the relations of friendship and alliance confirmed in the present Pact without any time limit. They propose however to review the individual provisions of the Pact on the expiry of ten years with a view to amending them in the light of experience gained in that time and in the light of the political situation then obtaining."

<sup>2</sup> On May 7, 1938, during his visit to Rome, Hitler in reply to Mussolini's speech at the State banquet said: "... Now that we have become immediate neighbours ... we both wish to recognize that natural frontier which Providence and history have clearly drawn for our two peoples. It is my unalterable will and my bequest to the German people that it shall accordingly regard the frontier of the Alps, raised by Nature between us both, as for ever inviolable. I know that then through this delimitation a great and prosperous future will result both for Rome and Germany." See Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 1462.

any mention in a German-Italian document. I also drew Attolico's attention to the fact that the two points in question were indirectly included in the second paragraph of the Preamble of our draft, where reference was made to the previously established principles and aims of Axis policy.

However, Signor Attolico would not allow himself to be fully convinced of this. He said that if we definitely refused an appropriate addition to the preamble, it might perhaps be possible, by way of a substitute, to make known in a special announcement the decision of the German Government that a start should now be made on the transfer of the Germans living in the South Tyrol. To this I replied that the resettlement question seemed to me not to be a subject in keeping with the broad political scope of this pact. We really must avoid giving the impression that Germany in return for making this pact had also had to pay Italy a special price.

I also took the opportunity of telling Signor Attolico, on instructions, that the invitation for May 21 was also extended to the Countess Ciano.

GAUS

### No. 372

485/231597-99

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

St.S. No. 414

BERLIN, May 12, 1939.

As instructed, I received the Nuncio today, and with reference to his recent audience with the Führer at Berchtesgaden<sup>1</sup> told him the following:

The Foreign Minister was anxious to take the earliest opportunity of giving the Nuncio an answer from the Führer to his recent *démarche*. Herr von Ribbentrop, however, was at present still indisposed at Munich<sup>2</sup> and it would probably be a few days before he would be able to see the Nuncio, here. So that the Curia might not be kept waiting unnecessarily, I had been charged with making a provisional reply.

The Führer himself had already given the Nuncio an indication that, given the close German-Italian relations and also because mainly Italian interests were involved, the German and Italian Governments would consult together. An exchange of views with Count Ciano took

<sup>1</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "Memorandum on Führer-Nuncio conversation of May 5, 1939, in file F.G. [Führer Conversations] under No. 76/39 in secret strong box." See document No. 331.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 325, footnote 4.

place on the occasion of the Foreign Minister's visit to Milan.<sup>3</sup> Both Governments adopted the same attitude; that neither in the Franco-Italian question nor in the German-Polish dispute had it yet been properly ascertained what the points of dissension were. It was not yet absolutely clear what either party demanded or was willing to concede. A *mise au point* was surely needed first before it was possible to reach a final decision, so to speak, on the peaceful settlement of such far-reaching controversial questions.

The present atmosphere also did not seem to be sufficiently favourable for the promotion of an international discussion in wider circles. This was the case with Franco-Italian relations, and certainly also for German-Polish ones; the threatening military preparations being made by Poland against Germany, and the way that prominent Poles were saying that East Prussia must become German [*sic* ?Polish] and that a battle of Berlin should be fought, and so on, were not calculated to promote peaceful and cool-headed discussion.

Given these circumstances the prospects for a successful meeting, such as that envisaged by the Vatican, must unfortunately from the beginning be considered as not too promising, and the German Government would regret it if, through failure, the generous suggestion of the Pope should be turned into an injury to his authority.

The Führer, as the Nuncio would certainly have noticed, very greatly appreciated the Pope's warm interest in the cause of peace and also in Germany herself. If, therefore, our answer and that of the Italian Government did not seem to be as favourable as might perhaps have been wished, the Vatican for its part would certainly recognize the sincere spirit in which our Government had dealt with the Curia's suggestion.

The Nuncio scarcely spoke of the matter itself again, and merely said, with reference to a remark of mine, that he, too, was not quite clear as to what urgent and menacing reports the Vatican could have received to cause a *démarche* to be made.

As before, the Nuncio attached great importance to treating the matter in strict confidence. He would be very grateful if the Foreign Minister were to receive him shortly and would be prepared, if necessary, to come to Sonnenburg or Dahlem for the purpose, according to the Foreign Minister's convenience, and as would be suitable for the discreet handling of the matter.

Herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> On May 6-7. See document No. 341.

## No. 373

533/239033

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 415

BERLIN, May 12, 1939.

After I had, as instructed, given the Nuncio a provisional reply today to his *démarche* on the question of peace,<sup>1</sup> he made some amiable remarks about the reception which he had been given at the Obersalzberg. He said that in a conversation with the Head of a State one could of course never go into very much detail. Any concrete questions always had to be discussed between the chancelleries first; then, when they were ripe for decision it was perhaps advisable for the Head of the State to have another conversation with the foreign diplomat concerned. Thus he too would be much pleased if, in due course, another conversation could take place between the Führer and himself.

To these unmistakable hints the Nuncio added the observation that in the last two months the Curia had refrained from making any attack on Germany, or any reference to our mutual dissensions with the Curia. Unfortunately, Germany had not responded to this conduct, at least, not in her practical dealings with Church interests. The Nuncio then went on to speak of certain sorely-felt points of grievance which I am following up elsewhere.<sup>2</sup>

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 372.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of the same date (not printed, 533/239039) Weizsäcker recorded the Nuncio's complaints about two measures against the Church in Austria.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On May 12, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Chamberlain, made a statement in the House of Commons, declaring that in the event of an act of war in the Mediterranean area, the British and the Turkish Governments would be "prepared to co-operate effectively and lend each other all aid and assistance in their power". For the full text of the declaration see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 347, cols. 952-953. The Turkish Minister President made that same day an identical declaration to the Turkish Grand National Assembly.

## No. 374

1625/388736

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 162 of May 13

ANKARA, May 13, 1939—6:15 p.m.

Received May 13—11:00 p.m.

Pol. II 1642.

Today's conversation with the Foreign Minister has yielded the following results:<sup>1</sup> The conclusion of the final pact will take a few weeks, so that there will be sufficient time for negotiations between Berlin and Ankara to ascertain how far Turkey has committed herself in detail, and whether there is a possibility of maintaining Turco-German relations as hitherto, wherein Turkey has the greatest interest.

2. Yesterday's Declaration<sup>2</sup> formed the basis of a policy which could be changed at any time, as soon as the occasion of it, that is, the Italian threat to Turkey's vital interests, disappeared.

3. Obviously a precise definition of Turkey's obligations, and in particular the definition of "aggressor", presents great difficulties. Turkey also fears too close a tie between Russia and Britain, as Russian aid in the Dardanelles in the event of war is by no means desired.

4. The Turkish press put all the blame for the change of front on to Italy. Germany is not mentioned at all.

I leave here on Monday evening<sup>3</sup> to make an oral report unless instructions to the contrary are received.

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 536 and 551.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., May 15.

## No. 375

7793/E566127

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 225 of May 13

BUCHAREST, May 13, 1939—10:30 p.m.

Received May 14—3:40 a.m.

Pol. II 1653.

With reference to my telegram No. 217 of May 9.<sup>1</sup>

Gafencu read me a memorandum on Potemkin's visit. According to this he told the latter that Rumania did not want to enter into an

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 349.



alliance either with Russia or with the Axis Powers, as Rumania would thereby form a bridge between hostile groups, across which war would be conducted. Rumania wanted to remain out of any combination, but would defend herself against any aggressor. Potemkin had therefore made him no offer. Potemkin had asked him how Rumania viewed the Polish-Rumanian Treaty of Alliance.<sup>2</sup> The Foreign Minister said he replied quite frankly: only as a safeguard against Russian attacks, not against Germany. Potemkin had gone on to ask him whether Rumania was prepared to make concessions to Bulgaria. He had replied that Rumania was prepared to pursue a policy of reconciliation with Bulgaria, but on condition that territorial concessions were excluded. When I asked him if he knew whether Potemkin had discussed this in Sofia, the Foreign Minister answered that he did not think so, and when I interjected "Really?" he added, "Other friends (not Germany or Italy) have suggested to us that we should cede Southern Dobruja; but there can be no question of that." Potemkin promised that a Minister would be sent here soon.

FABRICIUS

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 359 and footnote 4 thereto.

## No. 376

5555/E305224-26

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 226 of May 13

BUCHAREST, May 13, 1939—10:30 p.m.

Received May 14—5:15 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 190 of May 10.<sup>1</sup>

I have communicated the contents of this telegram to the Minister President for the information of the King. The Minister President said he could not understand Germany's attitude. According to the latest reports from the Rumanian military negotiators, they had been well received by General Thomas,<sup>2</sup> but Rumanian requests for meeting their requirements from Czech military equipment had been definitely turned down. This involved among other things uniforms, for which Germany could have no use, whereas they could be used in Rumania. Germany could surely also supply a few anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns from Czechia, even if she could not perhaps provide any mortars. After all we would receive additional petroleum for this. He had the impression that Germany had suddenly become suspicious again and did not want the straightforward cooperation with Rumania envisaged

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Chief of the Office of War Economy.

in the great Economic Treaty.<sup>3</sup> In fact the telegram from his negotiators, which arrived here last Friday, stating that Germany would not supply uniforms, decided the Rumanian Government at a critical moment not to break off economic negotiations with Britain, but to keep open the possibility of obtaining armament equipment from Britain and to continue the negotiations which were now concluded.<sup>4</sup>

The Minister President pointed out that Gafencu's statements in Berlin<sup>5</sup> must surely have given us confidence in Rumanian policy. In the way in which we were equipping the Army and supplying the arms industry, the Rumanian Government saw a basis for close cooperation and for interest in Rumanian stability.

Rumania, for her part, was firmly resolved to carry out the Economic Treaty faithfully and, even in the event of possible hostilities, would fulfil her obligations to Germany under long-term delivery agreements, as she would remain absolutely neutral in a possible conflict, and would not allow herself to be implicated in any combination of Powers. He recommended that we should reach long-term delivery agreements soon. In reply I told the Minister President that Clodius' telegram of May 10 and our readiness to expedite Rumanian orders with Skoda and Rheinmetall would serve to show the goodwill of the Reich Government. But Rumania must understand that, in view of the tension created by the British policy of encirclement, we must meet our own requirements first. Yugoslavia, who had approached us much more markedly and quickly, had also expressed certain desires which we must satisfy. Rumania could continue, as before, to hold up as an example to herself<sup>6</sup> the sound and prudent policy of Yugoslavia.

In my opinion we have reached a very critical stage in the development of our relations with Rumania. As Gafencu told me today, Rumania is faced with a difficult problem because of the different policies pursued by Yugoslavia on the one side and Turkey on the other. The Balkan Pact States are faced with the decision as to what course they should take. The Turkish Government had told him that the pact of assistance with Britain originated in the fear of an Italian thrust from Albania towards Salonika, and had added that the pact was not directed against Germany, with whom Turkey wanted to continue to maintain the best relations. I answered Gafencu by saying that whoever aligned himself against one Axis Power ranged himself against the other too. Turkish policy was therefore completely in-

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 78.

<sup>4</sup> For the text of the agreement concluded on May 11 which included a £5 million export credit, see British White Paper: Treaty Series No. 25 (1939), Cmd. 6018, *Protocol between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Rumanian Government regarding Commercial and Economic Relations with Rumania, Bucharest, May 11, 1939* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1939).

<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 227 and 234.

<sup>6</sup> In the Bucharest draft (7999/E575646-49) this sentence reads: "I could continue, as before, to hold up to Rumania as an example . . ."

comprehensible to me. Turkey had allowed herself to be caught up in Britain's encirclement policy just as Poland had.

I believe that by particularly skilful and generous handling of Rumania's wishes in the field of (group missing)<sup>7</sup> we can at the present moment bind the Government and people of Rumania closely to ourselves. The Economic Treaty pointed the way clearly and this way should be followed consistently. If we succeed in this, Rumania could certainly be induced to adhere more closely not to Turkish but to Yugoslav policy, and this would bring us great economic advantages in peace, and afford us considerable relief in war.

I beg to request the early communication of your views on this matter.

FABRICIUS

<sup>7</sup> The Bucharest draft here reads: "armaments".

## No. 377

259/169517-18

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Corrected Repeat Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 194 of May 13

ROME, May 13, 1939—10:45 p.m.

Received May 14—3:40 a.m.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

In the absence of Count Ciano, who left today for Florence in company with Prince Regent Paul,<sup>1</sup> Anfuso, his *Chef de Cabinet*, and closest colleague, has just asked me to call on him at once as he had a message from the Duce to give me at the earliest possible moment, and had explicit instructions not to await Count Ciano's return before doing so. The Duce wished to bring to my notice immediately the contents of a telegram which the "Foreign Office"<sup>2</sup> on May 11 sent the British Embassy here for information.<sup>3</sup> The Duce would in future send me all similar telegrams, in the expectation that we would treat them with the very strict secrecy necessary, and asked us to regard this as a new and important sign of his desire for full and confident cooperation.

The telegram to the British Embassy given to me today reads, translated into German on the basis of the text as translated from the English into Italian, as follows:

"I have telegraphed to Berlin (that is, to Henderson):

1) It is now clear from your reports that it is the present belief of Herr von Ribbentrop and others that His Majesty's Government are not prepared to implement in practice the guarantee given to Poland,

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 369, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 489 and footnote 1 thereto.

or at all events do not regard the Danzig question as coming within the scope of this guarantee.

2) We are naturally ready and anxious to see a fair settlement found, but Poland will never agree to a procedure by way of unilateral action or by ultimatum. In our view it is certain that Poland would regard an unconditional return of Danzig as a threat to her independence, and also that in the event of Germany resorting to armed force to achieve her object, Poland would oppose her with armed force, and if, in the course of such action by Germany, hostilities should break out between Germany and Poland, there is no doubt that both we and the French would intervene, and also it would be likely that various other States would join us.

The German Government may regard such an eventuality with equanimity, but in our view even though it be admitted that the Western Powers would suffer damage thereby, the latter would still be quite certain to triumph in the end. In other words, if Hitler, for the sake of the Danzig question were to provoke war, this war would lead not only to the destruction of the National Socialist régime but also very probably to the final collapse of the great German Reich.

3) You should be guided by this telegram in any conversation you may have with the Foreign Minister on this subject. Number 044, Halifax."

MACKENSEN

No. 378

8273/E588190

*The Director of the Political Department to the Consulate General  
at Danzig*

BERLIN, May 13, 1939.  
zu Pol. I M 1548 g.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Amtsrat Steinmeyer.

The cruiser *Königsberg*, commanded by Captain Scheuerlen, is to visit the port of Danzig during the period from August 25-28 of this year to participate in the twenty-fifth anniversary commemoration for the dead of the cruiser *Magdeburg*, to take place on August 25 of this year at the cemetery in Danzig. I would ask you to inform the Senate of the Free City of Danzig about the proposed visit and to report as soon as possible on this.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8273/E588187). In this communication of Apr. 12 the High Command of the Navy requested that the visit of the *Königsberg* should be notified to the Government of the Free City of Danzig. See also document No. 361.

<sup>2</sup> In a report of May 31 (not printed, 8273/E588192), which the Foreign Ministry passed to the High Command of the Navy with a cover note of June 8 (not printed, 8273/E588193), the German Consul General reported that the Danzig Senate would welcome the visit of the *Königsberg*.

The list of officers and details of the complement are enclosed.<sup>3</sup>

A copy of these instructions has simultaneously been transmitted to the German Embassy at Warsaw with the request to take the necessary action formally to announce this visit to the Polish Government.<sup>4</sup>

WOERMANN

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8287/E588329-30).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (8273/E588191). For the prescribed diplomatic procedure of notifying the Polish Government of visits of foreign warships to Danzig, see document No. 558, footnote 5.

## No. 379

1570/380013-15

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Letter-Telegram

No. 269 of May 13

PARIS, May 13, 1939.

Received May 16—9:30 a.m.

[Pol. II 1672.]<sup>1</sup>

An assessment of the political situation here presents the following picture:

1) That part of Daladier's statement on behalf of the Government<sup>2</sup> which dealt with foreign policy was unanimously approved by the whole Chamber. The fact that yesterday's division did not result in a unanimous vote of confidence is due solely to domestic causes, as is shown by Blum's speech. For this I refer you to my telegram No. 268 of May 13.<sup>3</sup>

2) The episode of the restriction of French foreign policy to the French Empire (policy of the "*repli impérial*"), characterized by the Munich agreement and the Franco-German declaration, seems to be over. It may remain an open question whether this policy was ever, in fact, intended seriously, and that a fundamental change of course in French foreign policy is therefore now being proposed by the Government statement, as Blum maintains, or whether France had ever really abandoned her traditional policy of keeping Germany down with the help of eastern alliances, but had merely shelved it last autumn because of inadequate military preparation and the unfavourable diplomatic situation, as Daladier's reply to Blum would seem to imply.

3) The malicious innuendos which the Minister President has made for the first time against German policy, particularly the reproach of bad faith directed against it, receive special emphasis from the press. The general cry, with which official circles are probably

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (1580/382187-89).

<sup>2</sup> At the opening session of the Chamber of Deputies on May 11.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8000/E575653-54).

concerned, characterizes as wholly irrelevant whatever may be said or promised by Germany, as German conduct in Bohemia and Moravia has given proof of German unreliability, and no further confidence can be placed in Germany. This cry is not least intended to discredit in advance and render difficult any objective discussion, e.g., of the Danzig question, where no arguments can be advanced against the German standpoint. As a result of this systematic campaign, the legend of Germany's bad faith has gained wide acceptance, particularly among the common people, who have thereby been worked up into a mood of irritation, which finds expression in the often heard phrase: *Ça ne peut pas continuer ainsi*.

4) The announcement of the Anglo-Turkish treaty of mutual assistance,<sup>4</sup> which is presented as a severe reverse for the totalitarian Powers, and as a good augury for the Anglo-French negotiations with Russia now in progress, has strengthened confidence in the policy of resistance to the totalitarian States, and this is reflected in this morning's press in the sharper tone adopted towards Germany.

5) Opposition to close ties with Russia, although still raised here and there, has now no practical significance, because even right wing circles are convinced that without Russia there would be no possibility of effectively stemming the German advance in the East. In addition there is the concern always latent here, and deepened by the fall of Litvinov, lest lack of cooperation on the part of the Western Powers might drive Russia into the arms of Germany. This anxiety also explains Daladier's acceding to the Russian demand for reciprocity of obligations, which gives the impression that in this respect France is today at least as much the driving force as Britain.

6) In spite of an unmistakable stiffening of the French attitude, and in spite of all incitement, neither the Government nor the people have abandoned the desire to avert a conflict with Germany, because it is realized that the consequences of such a clash are incalculable and that a permanent solution of Central and East European problems cannot be reached in this way. Nevertheless there is a danger that the Government, with their present policy and the anti-German propaganda which they tolerate, will fall prisoner to the notorious pro-war clique, and finally allow themselves to be drawn into a conflict. This danger is the greater as, with the great emphasis laid on the firmness of French policy and stress on the automatic character of the commitments, it will become increasingly difficult for the French Government to make concessions to Germany in the East.

WELCZEK

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<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483.

## No. 380

2791/547928-31

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, May 14, 1939.

[zu] W VI 1750.<sup>1</sup>NOTES ON A CONVERSATION WITH MR. H. DRUMMOND-WOLFF<sup>1</sup>

On May 13 Herr von Ribbentrop's Secretariat (Freiherr von Geyr) asked me to hold myself in readiness for a conversation with Mr. H. Drummond-Wolff. I met him at his hotel on May 14 and had lunch with him. He also gave me to understand, as he had the Embassy in London, that he was in Berlin with the knowledge of the close adviser of the British Cabinet, and asked me to treat our conversation as entirely confidential. I for my part said that I was only competent to deal with Anglo-German economic matters, and that if he wished to speak about political affairs no more value could be attached to my views than to those of a "man in the street".<sup>2</sup>

Drummond-Wolff said further by way of introduction that, since his arrival in Berlin, he had so far only had one discussion, and that was with Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat, whom he also hoped to see again on the 15th. The length of his stay in Berlin would depend on the possibility of further discussions.

The following may be mentioned from among the many subjects broached during the conversation:

1) Drummond-Wolff emphasized that the political combinations into which Great Britain was now entering did not preclude Great Britain from leaving to Germany, throughout the world and particularly in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, such economic activities as she was rightfully entitled to. In fact Britain would even support these activities. He asked what would be my view if Great Britain were to abandon her hitherto strict standpoint on the most-favoured-nation question, and that in two ways:

a) Firstly, Great Britain could forgo tariff preferences which Germany might negotiate in agreements with third countries—here he apparently had the Balkan countries in mind—and

b) Great Britain could, contrary to the standpoint she has so far adopted (in my view this has so far been only a theoretical standpoint), renounce her claim that in her relations with Germany the right to most-favoured-nation treatment should apply not only to tariffs but also to quotas.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 368.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

We discussed these questions only in general terms. Drummond-Wolff returned to them repeatedly, with, I felt very theoretical arguments, such as: *Internationally* the right of most-favoured-nation treatment must form the basis of economic relations, but in the particular *national* interest exceptions must be admitted. *Internationally-minded* Jewry was the greatest opponent of any relaxation of the right to most-favoured-nation treatment, etc.

2) Drummond-Wolff put the direct question as to *what amount* would be necessary for a *loan* to help Germany resolve her existing foreign exchange difficulties.

In the conversation on this subject, I drew attention to the declarations, repeatedly made, that Germany did not want to incur a new foreign debt, and regarding the *amount* I spoke roughly as follows:

a) Since our productive capacity was rising higher and higher, and given the tasks before us, the amount of foreign exchange we need for raw materials and food has really no upper limit.

b) Any loan, however, finds its limit easily calculated by the lender; this consists in the amount of *additional* foreign exchange which the lender allows us to earn by exports in order to enable us to pay therefrom interest and amortization on the loan.

3) Drummond-Wolff asked what we would think of a resumption of the *Anglo-German economic negotiations*, broken off in March, but was not quite *au courant* with the circumstances of the discussions running concurrently, namely:

a) the discussions between the *industrial* associations on cartel and price matters, and

b) the official *Government* discussions on the increase in German exports to Great Britain and—this is important!—to the British colonies to be achieved by tariff reductions and Government contracts.

He was aware that the British industrialists had recently informed their German colleagues that the discussions were to be continued in London in June.

As to the *Government* negotiations I gave it as my opinion that in accordance with the British promise they must be continued as soon as the *industrialists'* discussions had shown tangible results (as had already been achieved in many branches of industry).

4) Drummond-Wolff did not know that Anglo-German preliminary discussions for the regulation of *payments between the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and Great Britain* were to begin in London on May 18. He was very interested to hear this.

5) Actually the only political question which Drummond-Wolff asked was when we would make a claim for the *return of the colonies* and which colonies it would include.



I gave the usual answer, that we claim all colonies which belong to us; that we shall raise the claim in due course; and that it will be a matter for negotiation *which* colonial territories we receive.

RÜTER

## No. 381

1625/388741-42

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 176 of May 15

LONDON, May 15, 1939—9:33 p.m.

Received May 16—12:10 a.m.

Pol. II 1669.

With reference to my telegram No. 171 of May 8.<sup>1</sup>

I learn from a reliable source the following information about the Soviet Russian reply to the British proposals, which was presented this evening:<sup>2</sup>

The Soviet Russian Government persist in their demand that any Russian declaration of assistance must take the form of a comprehensive Three Power pact between Soviet Russia, Britain and France. This has shattered the British hopes that Soviet Russia might enter into a pact relationship on any basis other than that of complete reciprocity.

The Soviet Russian Government have furthermore declared that, in any case, negotiations on the question of the Baltic States can only be initiated when basic agreement has been reached on the big Three Power pact. Further, I am told that the British Government do not for the present intend to reply to this Russian refusal by a counter proposal. Lord Halifax will try, rather, to find a solution through direct negotiations with Potemkin at Geneva.<sup>3</sup>

Although the British Government have not yet examined the Russian reply closely, the impression is gaining ground here, according to my informant, that Great Britain is not disposed to make any further concessions to Soviet Russia.

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 343.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 520 and 530.

<sup>3</sup> The first meeting of the 105th session of the League of Nations Council was due to take place at Geneva on May 22.

## No. 382

174/135931-35

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 158

BERLIN, May 15, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Solely for the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 197.<sup>2</sup>

In agreement with the Italian Government, I have during the last few days given Ambassador Oshima the following information about the German and Italian views:

1) The German and Italian Governments are willing to continue to follow without change the political line so far taken by them towards Japan.

2) The two Governments have decided to sign a bilateral pact of alliance in the course of the present month, because they consider it opportune to meet with a swift counter move the political activity embarked on for purposes of propaganda by the Western Powers.

3) The trilateral Berlin-Rome-Tokyo negotiations are in no way prejudiced by the prior Italo-German pact of alliance. This pact of alliance will provide final proof of the unshakeable solidarity of the Rome-Berlin Axis from the juristic standpoint as well. If they desire a Three Power pact, the Japanese cannot but be glad to see the internal relationship between their two European partners clarified beyond a shadow of doubt and every possibility of internal divergences between these partners ruled out.

4) It is, moreover, not the fault of the German and Italian Governments that the conclusion of a Three Power pact is being so much delayed. For a long time I have been pointing out to the Japanese that, if the conclusion of a Three Power pact were postponed any longer, it might become necessary to conclude an Italo-German pact beforehand.

5) The fact that the Italo-German pact will in certain respects provide for closer ties than the present draft of the Three Power pact constitutes nothing to disturb the Japanese either. It is after all quite natural that political and military cooperation between the two European countries, who are neighbours and find themselves directly confronted by France and Britain, should be on more intimate lines than cooperation with far distant Japan. If, therefore, there emerges a difference between the two pacts, Germany and Italy are in no way thereby putting Japan politically on a lower level of friendship. World opinion, where the Rome-Berlin Axis has for long been a firmly

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 363.

established idea, will regard such a difference as a matter of course. Furthermore, it has always been Japan who has constantly pressed for cautious wording of the obligations in the Three Power pact. Germany and Italy for their part could not but welcome it if Japan were willing to join in the closer ties of the Italo-German pact. Japan cannot, however, demand, nor has she any interest in so doing, that Germany and Italy should in their mutual relations adapt themselves to the scale desired by Japan for the Three Power pact.

6) The existence side by side of the Italo-German pact and the Three Power pact will not involve any difficulties, either practically or technically. The several provisions of the present Japanese draft Three Power pact can remain completely unchanged. All that is required is the insertion at the end of a purely formal article, clarifying in legal terms the relationship of the two pacts to each other. I have handed Oshima the draft of an article to this effect.

7) The German and Italian Governments are extremely anxious that the Japanese Government should now reach their final decision quickly, so that the Three Power pact can be secretly initialled at the same time as the Italo-German pact is signed. This desire reveals once more that there is no intention on their part of disparaging, from the political aspect, their relations with Japan.

Please make use of the above arguments in conversation with your confidant and, if possible, with the War Minister direct, and thus press for a speedy positive decision by the Japanese Government. In so doing please intimate, as seems appropriate, the following:

Although the German and Italian Governments, as already emphasized above, are firmly resolved to abide by their previous policy towards Japan, yet it cannot pass unmentioned that the whole attitude of the Japanese Government up to now is gradually beginning to engender a certain scepticism in Rome and Berlin. Mussolini recently expressed concern as to whether the way in which Tokyo had so far dealt with the matter should not, after all, be interpreted as indicating that, in the end, the Japanese Government would not have the strength to make a positive decision. Moreover, the Führer has recently told me repeatedly that the Japanese attitude was becoming more and more incomprehensible to him. Japan must surely realize that, from her own point of view, her major political interests coincided with those of Germany and Italy and that her place was therefore at the side of these two Powers.

Further, please make it clear to your Japanese interlocutor that Japan's fear that America will join Britain and France in the event of war is certainly no argument against concluding a Three Power pact, since this pact will be the best means of keeping America out of war. On the other hand Japan must fully realize that the safeguarding of her position in East Asia, and especially in China, depends primarily

on the superiority of the Axis Powers over the Western Powers. If this superiority did not exist, Japan would very quickly feel the consequences. It is therefore indubitably in Japan's interests to reinforce this superiority by her accession, and not to convey the possible impression to the Western Powers that they could count on Japan's neutrality in a conflict with Germany and Italy.

The text of the draft pact and of the relevant documents will be telegraphed separately to Tokyo for your personal information.<sup>3</sup>

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 383.

### No. 383

174/135930-43

#### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 159

BERLIN, May 15, 1939—11:00 p.m.

For the Ambassador personally.

Herewith for your personal information are the papers referred to in telegram No. 158,<sup>1</sup> namely:

1) The draft pact for joint consultation and mutual assistance agreed upon by the German, Japanese and Italian Governments consisting of:

- a) the actual pact,
- b) the protocol of signature
- and
- c) the secret additional protocol.

2) The draft of a new article on the relationship of the Three Power pact to the pact between Germany and Italy to be inserted before the final article.

3) The draft of a note to be submitted by the Japanese Ambassador before the signature, on possible statements by the Japanese Government in reply to diplomatic enquiries.

4) The draft of a formal statement to be made orally by the Japanese Ambassador likewise before the signature.

The assent of the Japanese Government to the papers Nos. 2, 3, and 4 has not yet been received.

The text of the documents referred to above is as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 382.

PACT FOR JOINT CONSULTATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE BETWEEN  
JAPAN, ITALY AND GERMANY

The Imperial Japanese Government,  
The Italian Government,  
and the Government of the German Reich,

having regard to the fact that friendly relations between Japan, Italy and Germany have deepened since the conclusion of the Pact against the Communist International on November 25, 1936,<sup>2</sup> being convinced that the international activities of the Communist International are a threat to peace in Europe and Asia, and being resolved, in the spirit of the above-mentioned Agreement, to reinforce their defence against communist disintegration in Europe and Asia and also to safeguard the common interests of the three Contracting Parties, have agreed upon the following provisions:

Article I

In the event of one of the Contracting Parties becoming involved in difficulties owing to the conduct of a Power not party to this Pact, or of more than one of such Powers, the Contracting Parties will immediately consult together as to the common measures to be adopted.

Article II

In the event of one of the Contracting Parties being menaced without provocation by one or more Powers not party to this Pact, the other Contracting Parties pledge themselves to afford the menaced Power their political and economic support to remove this menace.

Article III

In the event of one of the Contracting Parties becoming the victim of unprovoked aggression by one or more Powers not party to this Pact, the other Contracting Parties pledge themselves to render aid and assistance.

The three Contracting Parties will, if the need should arise, immediately consult on and decide the necessary measures for carrying out the obligations laid down in the preceding paragraph.

Article IV

The original text of the Pact is drawn up in Japanese, Italian and German.

The Pact shall come into force on the day of signature and be valid for five years. The Contracting Parties will reach agreement on the further form of the cooperation between them in good time before the expiry of this period.

<sup>2</sup> For the text, as published at the time, see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 140, pp. 529-530. For the Secret Additional Protocol of the same date see vol. 1 of this Series, document No. 463.

In witness whereof the duly accredited plenipotentiaries of their Governments have signed this Pact and affixed thereto their seals.  
Done in triplicate, each copy being equally authentic, etc.

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#### PROTOCOL OF SIGNATURE

On the occasion of the signature of the Pact concluded this day the plenipotentiaries have agreed on the following:

(A) Relative to Articles 2 and 3 of the Pact, a threat to or aggression against Manchukuo will, pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 2 of the Protocol concluded between Japan and Manchukuo on September 15, 1932,<sup>3</sup> be regarded as a threat to or aggression against Japan.

(B) Relative to paragraph 2 of Article 4 of the Pact, if support or aid and assistance are still being rendered pursuant to Article 2 or 3 when its period expires, the Pact will remain in force until the end of the situation in which the support or aid and assistance is necessary.

Berlin, the.....

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#### SECRET ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL

On the occasion of the signature of the Pact concluded this day the aforementioned plenipotentiaries have agreed upon the following:

(A) Relative to Articles 2 and 3 of the Pact the competent authorities of the three Contracting Parties will, as soon as possible after the Pact comes into force, examine in advance what separate possibilities of conflicts exist and in what manner and to what extent the Contracting Parties, each according to its geographical situation, shall render support or aid and assistance.

(B) In the event of a war jointly conducted by them, the Contracting Parties pledge themselves not to conclude a separate armistice or peace.

(C) In the event of there being any commitments under existing treaties with third Powers, which are at variance with the provisions of this Pact, the Contracting Parties will not be bound by such commitments.

(D) This Secret Additional Protocol will not be published or communicated to third Powers without the concurrence of the Contracting Parties.

(E) This Secret Additional Protocol is valid for the same period as the Pact and the Protocol of Signature. It forms an integral unit with these two.

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<sup>3</sup> The Protocol between Japan and Manchukuo for the Establishment of Good Neighbourship and to secure Peace in the Far East, signed at Hsinking. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 135, pp. 637-638.

## PAPER No. 2

In the draft Pact for Joint Consultation and Mutual Assistance between Japan, Italy and Germany at present being negotiated a new Article worded as follows should be inserted before the final Article IV:

"The German Government and the Italian Government confirm in agreement with the Japanese Government that the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy signed on May 22, 1939,<sup>4</sup> which is the consequence of these countries being neighbours and of their special position in Europe, is not affected by the present Pact, and that therefore the present Pact is only applicable to the relationship between Germany and Italy in so far as the Pact of May 22, 1939, does not contain more extensive commitments.

## PAPER No. 3

## Note

The Japanese Government will, on the conclusion of the Pact between Germany, Italy and Japan now under negotiation, reply orally to any diplomatic enquiries from a third party regarding the Pact on the following lines:

1. The Pact is a purely defensive Pact. It pursues no aggressive aims, but its object is to ensure the maintenance of peace. The Pact therefore is not directed against any country whatsoever.

2. Historically the Pact has developed from the fact that the three Contracting Parties have joined together in recent years for common defence against the subversive activities of the Comintern. In the present international situation Japan, for her part, feels herself to be primarily menaced by the aspirations of the Communist International. The Japanese Government have therefore viewed these Communist aspirations emanating from Soviet Russia as the most acute menace to peace.

3. If one of the Powers party to the Pact should be attacked without provocation, the consequences for the signatory Powers are evident from the text of the Pact. As long as third Powers do not threaten or attack the Contracting Parties, the obligations for support and the rendering of aid and assistance provided for in the Pact do not come into operation.

## PAPER No. 4

On behalf of my Government I beg Your Excellency to take note of the fact that, at the present time and in the immediate future, Japan will, in the military sense, only be able to a limited extent to implement

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 426.

the obligations to render aid and assistance undertaken in Article III of the Pact. Further details regarding the military assistance to be given at any time in the future are reserved for the further discussions which are provided for in the Secret Additional Protocol.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 384

1625/388487-91

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Switzerland*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, May 15, 1939.

Sent May 17.

zu Pol. II 1139<sup>1</sup> Ang. II.

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

With reference to your telegram No. 43 of April 11.<sup>1</sup>

According to your telegram of April 11, M. Motta stated that M. Stucki, the Swiss Minister in Paris, had told the Director of Political Affairs in the French Foreign Ministry in reply to his statements concerning the proposed Anglo-French promise of guarantee to Switzerland, Holland, and Belgium that he took note of these communications with thanks and, at the same time, pointed out that this declaration was none of Switzerland's seeking and that it remained for her to decide the moment at which she might consider it necessary to make use of the guarantee. M. Motta described this reply of M. Stucki's as absolutely correct and, on the promise of a guarantee, only observed himself that it was indeed obvious that in case of emergency the Powers interested in Switzerland's neutrality would come to her help, so that, from that point of view, the guarantee need not have been given.

We cannot share M. Motta's opinion, as expressed in this communication of his, that after the conversation between M. Charvériat and M. Stucki in Paris, and after his [M. Motta's] statements to you, everything is really now in order. On the contrary we consider it necessary that you should return to the subject in authoritative quarters in Berne, especially as we are very anxious for an elucidation of the position resulting from Swiss neutrality. A discussion on the subject also seems desirable because, as you know, the Swiss Government's attitude to our questionnaire<sup>2</sup> on Roosevelt's so-called peace appeal was also not entirely free from ambiguity.

As to details, you are requested to speak somewhat as follows on this matter:

From the information given to you by M. Motta it has, during the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 181.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 250.



past month, been noted in Berlin with some surprise that the Swiss Government had not in fact, as we have hitherto assumed from the statements of Minister Frölicher,<sup>3</sup> been confronted with a *fait accompli* in the matter of the promise of a guarantee by Britain and France. Our surprise was increased when it became clear from M. Stucki's reply as communicated to you that it had been more than just a question of the Swiss Minister in Paris taking note of the French communication. In M. Stucki's statement that it remained for Switzerland to decide the moment at which she might consider it necessary to make use of the guarantee, there is actually implicit a formal acceptance of the offer of a guarantee by the Western Powers, as otherwise the condition by which M. Stucki limited the coming into effect of the guarantee would make no sense. We must regard this attitude of M. Stucki's as playing the Franco-British game, which consists in generously promising their assistance to third countries which are alleged to be threatened by Germany, with the transparent purpose of thereby imputing to Germany before the whole world aggressive intentions in which, actually, no one seriously believes. The Swiss Government, of course, are perfectly well aware that nothing is further from Germany's thoughts than to attack Holland, Belgium, or Switzerland, and that all the recent press reports on this subject were only malicious slanders. In regard to Switzerland in particular, it is, in our opinion, entirely incompatible with the idea of neutrality that two great Powers should presume to give a further special guarantee to a neutral State which, like Switzerland, had already, by the Declaration of Paris of November 20, 1815,<sup>4</sup> been explicitly assured of the guarantee of the signatories. M. Motta's statement on this point, that the Anglo-French promise of guarantee need not have been made because it was indeed a foregone conclusion that the Powers interested in Switzerland's neutrality would go to her aid, implied it is true, a certain criticism of the Anglo-French action, but this criticism in our opinion falls far short of how the Anglo-French action should really be appraised, namely that it does not promote Switzerland's neutrality but on the contrary produces ambiguities and thereby places it in doubt.

Further, as regards Germany's attitude, you need only call attention to the repeated and unequivocal statements which have been made by Germany on Swiss neutrality. In particular, you should again refer to the Führer's statements to Altbundesrat Schulthess on February 23, 1937,<sup>5</sup> and to Minister Frölicher when the latter took up his post in

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 109 and 129.

<sup>4</sup> Signed by the plenipotentiaries of Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia and Russia. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 3, pp. 359-360.

<sup>5</sup> On Feb. 26, 1937, at a meeting of the Swiss Federal Council, Altbundesrat Schulthess communicated a statement made to him by Hitler on Germany's relations with Switzerland. For an English translation of this statement see Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 1349.

Berlin.<sup>6</sup> In view of these facts we do not consider that the Swiss Government have the slightest cause for in any way associating themselves with the plans of Britain and France by making fresh agreements for safeguarding Swiss neutrality, as has obviously been done by Minister Stucki's statements. We must leave it to the Swiss Government to remove as best they may the very unfavourable impression which has been made here, and consider ourselves impelled at the same time to point out that any further step in that direction into which M. Stucki has allowed himself to be inveigled by the Quai d'Orsay must induce in us the suspicion that Switzerland, consciously and of her own volition, is pursuing a one-sided policy which is incompatible with her neutrality.

Please report as soon as possible on the reception and outcome of your representations.<sup>7</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>6</sup> On June 9, 1938. See vol. v of this Series, document No. 523, and also Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, p. 1464.

<sup>7</sup> In despatch No. 1519 of May 24 (not printed, 1625/388786-90) Köcher reported that he had carried out these instructions in an interview with Federal Councillor Motta on May 24.

## No. 385

259/169525-26

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 426

BERLIN, May 15, 1939.

After presenting a *note verbale*<sup>1</sup> on the Memel territory today, the British Ambassador started a conversation with me on the general political situation.<sup>2</sup> He was plainly anxious to unburden himself of some instructions (already known to us through other channels<sup>3</sup>) to the effect that Britain did not desire war and wished to avoid it through a German-Polish settlement, but was nevertheless ready and determined to go to the help of Poland in accordance with her pledged word, if we tried to alter the status of Danzig by force, thus causing Poland to go to war with us. The Ambassador expressed this commission of his in three different forms. He did not dispute my criticism of the strange British policy which had placed its decisions on war and peace in the hands of the Warsaw Government, in fact, in the hands of any subordinate Polish authorities. Henderson even admitted that this procedure simply placed a premium on Polish indiscretion. But he

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (259/169524). This Note stated that the British Government had decided to recognize *de jure* the German annexation of Memel and dealt with British consular representation there.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 525.

<sup>3</sup> The reference would appear to be to document No. 377.

said that our sudden march on Prague had wrought a complete change of outlook in London. In this mood, Britain had now given her word and would keep it, not for any such reason as preserving German Danzig for Poland, but in order not to leave Poland in the lurch in the event of war. Henderson said that unfortunately public opinion in Britain had become progressively worse during his period of service in Berlin, and was now even ready to enter a European war for the Poles, of whom Henderson had nothing favourable to say. Henderson had reason to believe that the last thing that the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, wanted was war, as he saw no good coming from it to Poland, although he was just as convinced as the British Government that the arms of Britain, France, and Poland would win in the end. This war, added Henderson, would be conducted defensively by the Western Powers. Of course each side would drop quite a few bombs on each others' houses, but the British were convinced that final victory would not rest with Germany and Italy as the Axis Powers had the shorter wind.

I listened to Henderson quietly and replied *inter alia* that he need not be surprised if the British guarantee of Poland was not taken very seriously in Germany, when the British Empire had considered it necessary to have itself guaranteed by the Republic of Poland! My other remarks about British hysteria, the angling for a one-sided treaty with Moscow, and the like, are by the way and need not be included here.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 386

2180/471070-78

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department*

BERLIN, May 15, 1939.

At the request of the Duce, Signor Attolico also proposes the amendments to the German draft of the German-Italian Pact<sup>1</sup> which appear in the two enclosures.

GAUS

[Enclosure 1]

At the end of paragraph 3 of the preamble the words "to secure their living space" should be substituted for the words "to realize their eternal rights to life".

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 371, footnote 1.

[Enclosure 2]

## Article 7

This Pact shall enter into force immediately upon signature. The two Contracting Parties are agreed that the first term of its applicability<sup>2</sup> is fixed at ten years. In due time, before the expiry of this period, they will reach agreement on the extension of the validity of the Pact.

<sup>2</sup> The word "*Anwendung*" is used here, in the text as finally signed it is replaced by "*Gültigkeit*" (validity). See document No. 426.

## No. 387

524/238021-29

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, May 15, 1939.

Pol. V 1490 g.

Submitted to the State Secretary on the instructions of the Foreign Minister. (A memorandum with enclosures by Senior Counsellor Bergmann on the question of reprisals against Poland.)<sup>1</sup>

SONNLEITHNER<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In a minute to Bergmann of May 13 (908/294141) Kordt wrote "The Foreign Minister requests a discussion on Monday [May 15] on reprisals to be taken against the Poles, in particular he desires proposals as to how the various Polish excesses and expulsions could be answered." See also documents Nos. 350 and 367.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal Note: "Herr Bergmann, I agree with your statements. In so far as reprisals—as described—would in the long run harm us more than the Poles, we should try to achieve more by means of propaganda (neutral journalists, objective reports in our press etc.). Further, the guarantor States should, through diplomatic channels, be made to feel more alarm over their Polish friends. Could not something perhaps be done through the agency of the Catholic Church (Archbishop of Breslau) [Cardinal Bertram] to make the true situation more widely known? W[eizsäcker] [May] 18."

[Enclosure 1]

BERLIN, May 15, 1939.

MEMORANDUM ON THE QUESTION OF REPRISALS FOR OPPRESSION  
OF THE GERMAN ELEMENT IN POLAND

Polish measures and excesses against Reich citizens and members of the German national group in Poland have already been answered in the last few months by corresponding measures against Polish citizens and members of the Polish national group in Germany, after intervention by our Consulates as well as by the Embassy in Warsaw had been of no avail.

1) Expulsions of German citizens from Poland have resulted in the immediate expulsion of Polish citizens from the Reich.

2) Expulsions of *Volksdeutsche* from the Polish frontier zone have for months been answered by expulsions of Poles with German citizenship from the German frontier area. Thus, for example, only a few days ago Count Donimirski, the only big Polish landed proprietor in Germany, was promptly expelled on account of the expulsion of the family of the *Volksdeutsch* landed proprietor von Körber of Körberode, who played a leading part in the German national group; and the organizer of a branch of the Polish Union [*Polenbund*] was expelled on account of the expulsion of the *Volksdeutsch* Graf v.d. Goltz. Six Polish priests domiciled in the German frontier zone were removed from thence because of their demagogic activities. Similar action was taken against the Polish leader, Arka Bozek, in the district of Ratibor.

3) Ill-treatment of *Volksdeutsche* and damage to the property of *Volksdeutsche* in Poland have been answered to some extent by corresponding action against members of the Polish minority. Thus on May 3, two teachers belonging to the Polish minority in Marienwerder were beaten up because of their arrogant behaviour. Window smashing and such like in German schools has, in German Upper Silesia, resulted in the demolition of a Polish minority school in the district of Gross-Strehlitz. Furthermore, about four weeks ago, a Polish Youth Hostel in the district of Ratibor was cleared out and the furniture destroyed.

Counter measures going beyond the limits described above come up against the following difficulties:

a) The German national group in Poland is some 900,000 strong, the Polish national group in the Reich at the most 150,000.

b) The German national group in Poland is in a strong position economically, whereas the Polish national group in the Reich mostly belongs to the lowest economic level. In Poznań and Pommerellen there are 41,588 agricultural holdings totalling 581,557 hectares and 567 estates amounting to 405,802 hectares, that is a total of 987,359 hectares in German possession. Polish land ownership in the Reich comprises some 4,000 farms totalling only 40,000 hectares, mostly of poor soil. In comparison with 770 German agricultural cooperatives with two controlling associations in Poland, the Polish national group in the Reich has only 21 credit cooperatives and 8 marketing organizations with one central association.

c) The Germans in Poland have 10 secondary schools, 115 private schools and 290 primary schools, the Poles in Germany, on the other hand, have only 2 secondary schools, 20 private schools, and 4 primary schools.

The German cultural unions in Poland have about 150,000 members; the Union of Poles in the Reich has only about 24,000 members.

In view of this fundamentally different structure of the two national groups, more vigorous reprisals against members of the Polish national

group in the Reich—justifiable and desirable as they may be in themselves—will only give rise to more vigorous measures in the economic and cultural sphere against Germans in Poland, resulting in irreparable loss of property by the German national group to the advantage of Poland, while the Polish national group in the Reich has no considerable property to lose.

In addition, sharper reprisals would induce thousands of agricultural and industrial workers of Polish origin to remove from the German frontier zone, where there is already a serious shortage of such workers at present (especially in the mines of Upper Silesia), into other parts of the Reich.

Of the Polish citizens living in the Reich unfortunately only a limited number can be considered for reprisals. According to data supplied by the Reich Ministry of Labour, the President of the Reich Office for Supply of Labour and the Reich Ministry of the Interior,<sup>3</sup> reprisals could be taken against independent shopkeepers and traders and against a limited number of higher employees without damage to German economy. The overwhelming majority of Polish citizens, however, cannot be considered for such measures, as they belong to the German national group. The remaining Polish citizens are, in the main, agricultural or industrial workers for whom there is at present the greatest need in the Reich.

Contrary to previous practice the German press—and recently the radio also—has for the last few weeks been publishing reports on the oppression of the Germans in Poland. Such reports could be published still more widely than at present in order to counter still further reports by the hostile foreign press on anti-Polish measures in the Reich.

Submitted according to instructions through the Under State Secretary and the State Secretary to the Reich Foreign Minister.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 350, and footnote 2 thereto.

[Enclosure 2]

May 15, 1939.

W IV 1836.

#### MEMORANDUM ON THE QUESTION OF ECONOMIC REPRISALS AGAINST POLAND

I. Under the German-Polish Economic Treaty of July 1, 1938,<sup>4</sup> which came into force on September 1, 1938, and is valid until February 28, 1941, and the supplementary agreement of March 2, 1939,<sup>5</sup> we can deliver to Poland goods to the value of about 150 million RM yearly against purchase of Polish goods to an equal value. Since the inclusion

<sup>4</sup> See *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1938, Part II, pp. 561–556.

<sup>5</sup> See *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 628–631.

of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (German-Polish Exchange of Notes of April 24, 1939)<sup>6</sup> Greater Germany participates in Poland's imports and exports to the extent of over 30 per cent, and thus at present stands at the head of all countries importing from, and exporting to Poland (ahead of Great Britain whose share in Poland's total imports in 1938 amounted to 11.4 per cent and in Poland's total exports to 18.2 per cent). From this alone it can be seen that Poland's foreign trade would be hard hit by reprisals by Germany.

II. In deciding the question of whether we would suffer heavily by such reprisals, it should be pointed out that our imports from Poland consist almost exclusively of important raw materials: timber, flax, food-stuffs, iron and steel and—since the reunion of the Sudetengau with the Reich—also coal, which is at present indispensable for us; besides these main items there is also the import of numerous raw materials for industry (semi-finished iron products, zinc, feathers, bristles, hides, skins, rags etc.). An embargo on these imports would be keenly felt by German industry and would considerably increase our scarcity of timber and create difficulties in providing food (pigs, butter). Mention should also be made of the fact that, in the reprisals to be taken by us against Poland, damage to the vital interests of the Free City of Danzig and of the *Volksdeutsche* in Poland would be unavoidable.

III. For the sake of completeness it may also be mentioned that, in addition to the exchange of goods taking place within the framework of the Economic Treaty referred to above, goods are delivered by Germany to cover the debit account of the Reichsbahn with the Polish Exchequer for Corridor traffic; furthermore, in the near future, deliveries of machinery, apparatus and factory equipment for the new Polish industrial centre at Sandomir, at present under construction, will start under the Credit Agreement concluded on September 30, 1939 [*sic* 1938],<sup>7</sup> to a total of some 60 million RM (spread over 9 years). An embargo on the machinery most urgently required by Poland could be considered as a reprisal. However, it must also be noted here that, under this Agreement, Poland has already delivered to us 10 million RM worth of grain and timber, and that in the event of Poland denouncing the Agreement, we would have to pay for these advance Polish deliveries.

IV. The figures quoted in the introduction for our exchange of goods with Poland (over 30 per cent of Poland's total imports and exports) only apply to our trade with Poland in normal conditions. Since the start of this year, the boycott of German goods engineered by Polish chauvinistic circles, especially the Western Union [*Westmarkenverband*],

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (8006/E575703-07).

<sup>7</sup> Of Sept. 30, 1938. Not printed (8005/E575682-99).

has made itself increasingly felt, so that in the first months of this year, a decline in our exports to Poland of about 20-25 per cent, compared with the corresponding months of last year, was recorded; in March, however, our exports to Poland again increased, after strong representations on this boycott had been made both by the Government Committee and by our Embassy in Warsaw. In the last few weeks the boycott movement seems to have increased considerably in intensity, but its results cannot yet be established statistically. A few days ago Poland stopped the export of flax which is extremely important for the German linen industry, especially for the Sudeten German mills. We have already protested against this measure, moreover an embargo on the export to Poland of calcined pyrites, slivers and tops, and graphite is under consideration, as is also the issue of an order banning the export of machine tools to Poland.

V. On May 22, the German and Polish Government Committees for the negotiation of German-Polish trade are to meet in Berlin for their normal session (which takes place roughly every three months). In view of the absence on other business of the Chairman, Senior Counsellor Schnurre, these negotiations will be conducted for Germany by Ministerialrat Schefold, of the Reich Food Ministry, the German representative next in seniority.

VI. In conclusion, the following may be said on the question of economic reprisals against Poland. In the economic agreements with Poland we have to an exceptional extent put into practice the principle of only importing raw materials and food stuffs important to ourselves and of paying for by far the greater part of these with German finished goods. An embargo on the most important items of Polish exports to Germany would affect Poland keenly but would also cause very considerable difficulties for numerous German industrial undertakings and also to a certain extent for food supplies; an embargo on Polish coal and semi-finished iron goods from the Olsa region would be a heavy blow for the Sudeten German area (to some extent also for the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia) as these areas are dependent on Polish raw materials.

The experiences of the nine years' economic war of 1925-1934 with Poland showed that attrition of Poland's economic strength through our measures of economic warfare only succeeded to a relatively small degree. The explanation for this is to be sought in Poland's primitive economic structure.

On the other hand it can already be regarded as an established fact that the policy recently initiated by Poland, her military measures and the feeling of uncertainty in the whole country, have inflicted a serious economic blow on Poland, which, as everything goes to show, will soon be felt to a far greater extent if the present state of affairs continues.

CLODIUS



## No. 388

174/135944

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 204 of May 16

Tokyo, May 16, 1939—7:05 p.m.

Received May 16—1:40 p.m.

I refer you to DNB No. 169<sup>1</sup> regarding the French Ambassador's *démarche* to the Foreign Ministry on the subject of the Anglo-Franco-Russian negotiations. I learn from a good source in the Foreign Ministry (group mutilated) that the Government do not place any practical value on the French Ambassador's assurances about the limitation of the pact negotiations to Europe. The Vice Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> had drawn the Ambassador's attention to the fact that a reduction in the pressure on Soviet Russia's Western frontier would inevitably increase the danger from her in the Far East. Japan would therefore have to take the new development into account.

According to what my informant said, the Ambassador hinted unmistakably that, in the event of reinforcement of the Anti-Comintern Pact, the inclusion of the Far East in the scope of the negotiations could certainly be expected.

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> Renzo Sawada.

## No. 389

1576/381698-99

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 105 of May 16

Warsaw, May 16, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received May 17—11:55 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 99 of May 12.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning Potemkin's visit to Warsaw I have received the following additional information from a reliable source.

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<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1256/338497-98). In this telegram Moltke reported what he had learned about Potemkin's visit; Beck's motives in the discussions appeared in the first place to be to support the Western Powers in their collaboration with Moscow, without risking too close a tie between Poland and Russia. There were no signs that military support had been discussed. Moltke had learned from a source connected with the Polish Foreign Ministry that Potemkin had conveyed to Beck that Litvinov's fall would not alter materially the Soviet attitude to the Western Powers.

1) Potemkin was very keen to learn why Poland was opposed to Soviet assistance. Beck thereupon developed his well-known thesis of the balance of power, and explained that just as he had rejected collaboration with Germany directed against Soviet Russia, so also, conversely, commitments directed against Germany were not in accordance with Polish interests. Potemkin had shown understanding for this point of view, and meanwhile the Polish Government had received a communication to this effect also from Molotov direct.

2) The Foreign Ministry here had not gained the impression from what Potemkin said that the Soviet Government were seriously expecting the British plans for a pact to be realized; there was no longer any desire for collective pacts of the Litvinov stamp. The new Soviet Russian proposal for a triple alliance<sup>3</sup> is accordingly also regarded by the Foreign Ministry here merely as a tactical manoeuvre.

3) Potemkin expressed a desire for the abrogation of the Polish-Rumanian Treaty of Alliance<sup>4</sup> directed against Soviet Russia. Beck pointed out that the text of the treaty in its latest version did not mention Soviet Russia, and that the treaty obligations applied to all frontiers. Potemkin took note of this without making further claims.

4) The Baltic States were also discussed, but only to the effect that their neutrality should be respected. I have not been able to ascertain anything else here which might confirm the authenticity of the agreement, reported by the Helsinki Legation,<sup>5</sup> for the occupation of Estonia and Latvia by the Soviet Army.<sup>6</sup>

V. MOLTKE

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 381.

<sup>4</sup> As first concluded in 1921, this Treaty between Poland and Rumania had been in the form of a defensive alliance with obligations of mutual assistance in the event of unprovoked attack on the existing Eastern frontiers of either country (see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 114, pp. 916-917). On renewal in 1926, the Treaty was remodelled as one of mutual guarantee within the framework of the Covenant of the League of Nations, the obligations of mutual assistance applying against any unprovoked aggression (see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 125, pp. 981-983). The Treaty was renewed in substantially the same form in 1931, with provision for automatic extension at five-yearly intervals unless denounced by either party (see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 134, pp. 1050-1051). The 1921 Treaty had provided for a Military Convention on methods of rendering assistance and the later Treaties for *arrangements techniques*; no such Conventions were, however, published. An account of successive Polish-Rumanian secret military conventions or *arrangements techniques*, concluded in 1921, 1922, 1926, and 1931, is given in *Polskie Siły Zbrojne w Drugiej Wojnie Światowej* (*Polish Armed Forces in the Second World War*) published by the General Sikorski Historical Institute in London, 1951, vol. 1, Pt. 1, pp. 106-107; it is there stated that these Conventions provided for mutual aid in case of aggression "by Eastern neighbours". See also Gamelin: *Servir* (Paris, 1946), vol. II, annex II.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 62 of May 12 (1796/408834) Blücher reported: "According to the Foreign Minister's information from London and Paris, in Potemkin's discussions in Warsaw, it has been proposed that in the event of a German-Polish war the Russian Army should occupy Estonia and Latvia and operate from there against Germany."

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in Grundherr's handwriting: "Erkko sticks to his opinion (latest telegram from Blücher)." No such telegram from Blücher has been found.

## No. 390

406/214371-74

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 427

BERLIN, May 16, 1939.

I gave the Estonian Minister today the enclosed German proposals for amendments to the German-Estonian treaty. The Minister appeared to agree with the proposals and will submit them to his Government.

As regard the reservation<sup>1</sup> at issue in respect of the Estonian-Latvian Treaty, the Minister again put forward two reasons which prompted his Government to ask that such a reservation be included in the treaty; these were:

a) The Estonian-Latvian Treaty was, so to speak, the iron ration of his country's policy. Care must be taken that the German-Estonian treaty should not cause this iron ration to be described as solely an anti-Russian element in Estonian policy.

b) The Government might well also have difficulties with Parliament without this reservation. I told the Minister in plain terms that we still did not favour the reservation.

The Minister then produced the attached alternative proposal, marked P[oint]2, the sense of which is that, when the German-Latvian treaty lapses, the German-Estonian treaty can also be invalidated.

I adhered to my point of view, but accepted the Estonian proposal for study.

In conclusion I promised the Estonian Minister that the treaty could be signed here on Friday<sup>2</sup> if we reached agreement in the meantime. If not, there would probably be a fairly long delay owing to the German Government's preoccupation with other business.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 352.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., May 19. The German-Estonian Treaty and the German-Latvian Treaty were in fact signed on June 7. See Editors' Note on p. 664.

[Enclosure 1]<sup>3</sup>

## I

Article 2, para. 2, of the German-Estonian Treaty would be worded as follows:

"The Treaty shall come into force with the exchange of instruments

<sup>3</sup> According to a memorandum by Weizsäcker, St.S. No. 428 of the same date (not printed, 116/66598-99), identical proposals *mutatis mutandis* were handed to the Latvian Minister the same day. In a further memorandum, St.S. No. 445 of May 19 (not printed, 406/214375), Weizsäcker recorded that the Estonian Minister had that day telephoned to say that his Government agreed to the German draft of the three Estonian amendments.

of ratification and thenceforth be valid for a period of ten years. Unless the Treaty is denounced by one of the signatories at the latest six months before this period expires, its validity will extend for a further ten years. The same applies to the ensuing periods."

## II

A Protocol in the following terms would be signed at the same time as the Treaty:

### Protocol of Signature

At the signature of the German-Estonian Treaty this day, the agreement of both parties on the following points has been put on record:

1) The continuance of normal trade and transit of goods at peace-time level between the Contracting Party not at war and the third Power shall not be regarded as inadmissible assistance within the meaning of Article 1, para. 2, of the Treaty.

2) Should the negotiations in progress between Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland concerning the conclusion of similar treaties result in provisions of one or more of these treaties varying from those of the Treaty signed this day between Germany and Estonia, the German Government are prepared to come to an agreement with the Estonian Government, at the latter's request, regarding a corresponding amendment in the last-named Treaty.

[Enclosure 2]

P[oint] 1.

The Estonian Government propose the following alternative to the interpretation of Article 1:

"Trade and transit of goods within the limits of the usual relevant neutrality regulations shall not be regarded as assistance in respect of the action mentioned in the second paragraph."

P[oint] 2.

As regards the reservation relating to the Estonian-Latvian Treaty of Defensive Alliance the Estonian Government propose the alternative that the validity of the Estonian-German Treaty be made dependent on the validity of the Latvian-German Treaty and vice versa, in such a way that Estonia has the right to denounce the Treaty should the Treaty with Latvia lapse.

## No. 391

2886/565443-44

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 435

BERLIN, May 16, 1939.

Pol. VI 1273.

The Finnish Minister today read out to me the attached memorandum<sup>1</sup> as an oral reply from the Finnish Government to our proposal for a pact of non-aggression. Furthermore, he gave me for information the Finnish communiqué<sup>2</sup>, also attached, which the Finnish Government intend to publish tomorrow morning.

I first told the Finnish Minister that since the Finnish Government had been dealing with the matter for a fairly long time and had drafted a communiqué on our diplomatic exchanges, I desired to reserve time for my Government to study the communiqué and to make any counter proposals or to issue a communiqué of their own. I therefore requested the Minister to inform Helsinki immediately that the Finnish communiqué should be held back.

Under reservation as to any reply the German Government might make, I went on to say that I should like to draw attention to certain points which had struck me while the Finnish communication was being read: For example it said that Finland did not wish to become a pawn in political Great Power combinations and therefore desired no alteration in her present treaty system. I did not understand this reason for rejecting Germany's suggestion. I could not imagine how a non-aggression pact with Germany could possibly contain any disturbing element in this respect. To the best of my knowledge Finland had a non-aggression pact with Russia, and Finland had apparently not regarded the entry into such a relationship as an undesirable form of contact.

Hereupon the Minister produced a paper which had already been prescribed for him as answer to my objection, and wherein he put forward Finland's special position *vis-à-vis* Russia owing to their common land frontier as the deciding factor in the Finnish-Russian Treaty. I received the answer with due scepticism.

I told M. Wuorimaa, furthermore, that I was struck by the fact that both in his oral reply and in the communiqué, the German approach to Finland was being enlarged into an approach to the Northern States. But our suggestion to Finland had been a purely bilateral affair. Therefore, I could not see what the other States had to do with it.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2886/565445-47). This memorandum explained the Finnish Government's reasons for declining the German offer of a non-aggression pact, for which see documents Nos. 314 and 330.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2886/565448).

In conclusion I told the Minister that, as I had said before, I reserved the right of the German Government to make any further statement, but was sure that they would not ask the Finnish Government to revise their decision. I assumed, rather, that the German Government would take note of the Finnish reply and draw their own conclusions from it.

The Minister, who had previously said that his country was almost certain to give its assent, was visibly embarrassed in carrying out his instructions.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> In two memoranda, St.S. Nos. 437 and 438 of May 17 (not printed, 2886/565453-54 and 2886/565458-60), Weizsäcker recorded conversations with the Norwegian and Swedish Ministers, who brought replies from their Governments declining the German offer of non-aggression pacts. Both Ministers left with him written communications explaining the reasons for their Governments' refusals (2886/565455-57 and 2886/565461-65).

## No. 392

585/242413

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 433

BERLIN, May 16, 1939.

I spoke to the Bulgarian Minister today about Bulgaria's hopes of obtaining former Czech war material.<sup>1</sup>

The Minister told me that only today there had been a satisfactory conversation between the Bulgarian representative and Major-General Thomas.<sup>2</sup> Suitable items would now have to be selected from the war material list supplied to the Bulgarians. Conditions of payment could be arranged in some such way as this: part to be paid in cash, and the remainder within a period of up to five years.

The Minister then further recommended that if possible Herr Clodius should go to Sofia to conclude the transaction.

In conclusion the Minister said that he was pleased at the trouble we had taken and at our cooperative attitude in the matter. He then went on to talk of political affairs, which are noted elsewhere.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Chief of the Office of War Economy.

<sup>3</sup> In a second memorandum, St.S. No. 434 of even date (585/242414), Weizsäcker recorded: "The Bulgarian Minister described to me today how the political horizon of his country had further darkened since Turkey had entered into such close relations with Britain. The Minister believed that his country would shortly be exposed to further pressure and referred to an ugly frontier incident in the Dobruja when thirty native Bulgarians had been shot, besides another lesser frontier incident on the Greco-Bulgarian frontier. M. Draganov hastened to add that Bulgaria would succumb neither to threats nor blandishments. On my side I tried to lighten the gloomy picture painted by the Minister. M. Draganov concluded with his old refrain: Bulgaria must arm and hoped for our help."

## No. 393

2590/524711

*Note by the Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, May 16, 1939.  
zu Kult. A 1417<sup>1</sup> Ang. II (g).

Today I discussed with SS-Obergruppenführer Lorenz<sup>2</sup> and SS-Oberführer Behrends<sup>3</sup> the question of recruiting SS-men from members of the German national groups in North Schleswig and Estonia. Obergruppenführer Lorenz said that this recruiting had nothing to do with questions of the national community but that the Reichsführer-SS was trying to secure particularly pure Nordic racial types for the Verfügungstruppe.<sup>4</sup>

Herr Lorenz agreed to use his influence with the departments concerned so that in view of the present situation in foreign policy, such recruiting among *Volksdeutsche* should be dispensed with entirely or only undertaken with the greatest caution.

It was generally agreed that any return home by *Volksdeutsche* who had served in the SS would only be possible in the rarest instances.<sup>5</sup>

V. TWARDOWSKI

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 265.<sup>2</sup> Head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.<sup>3</sup> An official of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.<sup>4</sup> The SS-Verfügungstruppe formed the nucleus of the force which later became known as the Waffen-SS.<sup>5</sup> A typewritten marginal note shows that copies were sent to the Legations at Tallinn and Copenhagen.

## No. 394

472/228675-77

*Ambassador Moltke to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

WARSAW, May 16, 1939.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: Although I am on the most friendly terms with Sakoh, the Japanese Ambassador here, I find myself obliged to draw your attention to what is perhaps his somewhat excessive busying of himself with German-Polish affairs.

In conversations with me recently Sakoh has repeatedly stated that the Japanese Government are bound to attach the greatest importance to good relations between Germany and Poland. This is of course understandable since tension between Germany and Poland would automatically benefit Soviet Russia, which naturally would not suit the Japanese. However, I have the impression that Sakoh would also

be glad to turn this theoretical interest in an improvement in German-Polish relations into practical activity. He seems to have formed all sorts of theories on the subject already and recently explained to me in great detail that the important thing was to dispel Poland's anxiety over the military aspects of the Danzig question; for this merely a pledge by Germany not to fortify Danzig in the event of its reincorporation would probably suffice.

Sakoh, who is on friendly terms with the Director of the Eastern Department of the Foreign Ministry here,<sup>1</sup> already went to Berlin some weeks ago at the latter's instigation in order to induce the Japanese Ambassador there to make a *démarche* to the Foreign Ministry. At that time—I think it was just before Beck's visit to England<sup>2</sup>—it was a matter of stating that Poland still continued to attach importance to good relations with Germany. Now Sakoh was in Berlin again last week and I consider it possible that he was once again entrusted with a mission by Poland, not only because he kept this journey secret from me but also because it is discussed quite openly in journalistic circles here.

I only wish to let you know briefly about this, because it is perhaps as well for you to know about these proceedings in case the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin may some time happen to mention Polish matters.<sup>3</sup>

With best wishes and

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

MOLTKE

<sup>1</sup> Tadeusz Kobylanski.

<sup>2</sup> From Apr. 3-7.

<sup>3</sup> This letter bears the initial "[Ribbentrop]" in the margin. In a letter of May 23 (472/228678) Weizsäcker replied: "Dear Moltke, I have submitted to the Foreign Minister your letter of May 16, about the Japanese Ambassador in Warsaw, Sakoh. As you also propose in your letter, the Foreign Minister will, as opportunity arises, say a word to Ambassador Oshima about Sakoh's busying himself in German-Polish affairs."

## No. 395

2196/473581-85

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, May 16, 1939.

Pope Pius XII upon whom, according to an old prophecy, has fallen the title of "Pastor Angelicus", has the desire to go down in history as a "Great Pope" such as Leo XIII, as a messenger and accomplisher of peace on the basis of justice, as a bringer of peace to the world. His

<sup>1</sup> The author of this memorandum was Bergen, as emerges from a letter dated May 20 (not printed, 2196/473577-79) which he wrote to Weizsäcker during his visit to Berlin (see document No. 258, footnote 1).



first pronouncements and acts after taking office should be judged and assessed from this point of view also.

For the Pope the most important points in his programme are at present:

(1) the settlement of the differences with Italy.

(2) to conclude peace with Germany.

With reference to (1): The relations between the Curia and the Italian Government suffered before the death of Pius XI<sup>2</sup> a rapidly increasing deterioration. The crisis, then often feared, can at the moment be regarded as lifted. The reduction of differences is proceeding quickly at present thanks to the greatest accommodation shown by both sides; by the Duce because of his desire to have the whole of Italy, including the clergy, unitedly behind him in critical times too; and, apart from this consideration, by other persons, because of their religious attitude.

With reference to (2): An early normalization of our relations with the Curia is earnestly hoped for by the Italians. Friends of many years' standing make no secret of it to me that the German-Vatican tension<sup>3</sup> is felt to be a heavy strain on the Axis and that the blame for veering towards France, not *per se* desired by the Pope, must be laid upon Germany.

The Pope has given me to understand very emphatically—also after his assumption of office—his “ardent wish” to re-form friendly relations with Germany; he has also stated quite openly, to Germans whom he received in audience, that he “loved Germany” and he hoped for nothing more fervently than for an early peace with us. This desire is shared by numerous Italian clergy in Rome of both the higher and lower orders.

After the death of Pius XI there set in a noticeable *détente* in the Vatican with regard to Germany which led in part to high hopes for an impending *rapprochement*. Recently a reaction has made itself felt. The Pope felt “hurt” at the absence of a German response to his desire for peace, expressed “sincerely and with full conviction”; he was being forced more and more to the assumption that the expressions of sympathy and congratulation which were most thankfully received by him were due to my highly valued initiative, and that official Germany did not really seek peace with the Church and the Holy See.

I have repeatedly pointed out to Cardinal Pacelli that the present tension is no longer a matter of interpretation of legal texts, but of a psychological problem, i.e., of mistrust against mistrust, which must be dispersed before a reform of the present abnormal relations is begun,

<sup>2</sup> On Feb. 10, 1939. Cardinal Pacelli was elected Pope on Mar. 2, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> For the preceding circumstances of German-Vatican relations, see vol. I of this Series, chapter VI, and vol. IV, chapter V.

otherwise all attempts at improvement would be doomed to failure from the start.

These important elements of mistrust, displeasure and general atmosphere must, particularly in view of the sensitive nature of the Pope, be given the most careful consideration.

The Pope recently declared emphatically that in the interests of concluding peace with Germany he would be prepared for far-reaching concessions, providing the vital interests of the Church and principles of dogma were not endangered. This declaration is meant sincerely. The Pope, who has reserved dealing with German affairs to himself, is, however, a difficult and tenacious negotiator, who, in the course of the negotiations, is in the habit of continually enlarging the scope of the demands and will endeavour to save as much as possible of the Concordats,<sup>4</sup> which are his work.

Cardinal Pacelli asked me on one occasion how I myself envisaged the re-formation of our relations: I replied that it was similar to the building of St. Peter's, which had been built into the old Constantinian basilica, patiently, and after numerous alterations to the original plan, whilst the basilica was gradually demolished.

In this situation a settlement with the Curia, desirable and expedient on grounds of foreign policy, can only be approached slowly and in various stages:

(1) An endeavour should first be made to purify the atmosphere and remove the distrust by an official communication—possibly to be made by the Ambassador orally—to the Pope that the resumption of friendly relations with the Holy See was also the desire of the Reich Government; and perhaps a hint that a prominent member of the Reich Government (the Reich Foreign Minister) would in certain circumstances pay a purely courtesy visit to the Pope; for this, an invitation by the Pope could perhaps be obtained. (It has been the custom for Heads of States, and official persons, on official visits to Rome to pay courtesy calls also on the Pope; neglect to do this by Germans has been felt painfully as a sort of degradation.)

(2) The favourable disposition of both sides should first find its expression in a press truce; on the Vatican side, attacks to stop against Germany, German personages and institutions. On the German side, attacks to stop against the Pope, Vatican personages, the Church and its institutions.

(3) It does not appear advisable to take up the whole complex of questions contained in the various Concordats at once; rather it is preferable, in accordance with the situation, to deal first with this or that question. As far as can be ascertained the Pope has especially at heart the question of the Confessional Schools and the education (Church

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<sup>4</sup> See vol. I of this Series, document No. 690.

care) of youth. To his *entourage* he is said to have expressed anxiety over the speed with which "anti-Church" measures were being carried out in the Ostmark,<sup>5</sup> regardless of the vested rights of the Church.

(4) Before starting a detailed exchange of ideas and before entering on actual negotiations it should be ascertained whether on our side all measures requisite for our vital interests have already been carried out so that it would be possible to guarantee that the agreements gradually to be reached are not only concluded but also applied. Disappointments on the Vatican side in these respects would seriously increase tension and might, instead of achieving the peace aimed at, rather lead to a new struggle conducted more skillfully and dangerously by the present Pope.

(5) The theme for the exchange of ideas and the subsequent negotiations would be: Settlement with the Curia, stabilization by a—possibly only loose—agreement, which would *de facto* take the place of the Concordats with the Reich, Prussia, Bavaria, Baden and Austria.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> i.e., Austria.

<sup>6</sup> In a letter of May 23 (not printed, 2196/473589) Weizsäcker wrote to Bergen that Ribbentrop would like to see him before his return to Rome. No record of any such meeting at that time has been found. On May 30, in telegram No. 32 to Rome (2196/473590), Weizsäcker sent the following message: "For the Ambassador personally, decipher yourself: The Foreign Minister wishes me to convey a request from Prince Philip of Hesse that the fact of his visit to the Pope should not be referred to or admitted." See also document No. 502.

## No. 396

F13/380

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 31

BERLIN, May 23, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister received the Apostolic Nuncio at 1 p.m. on May 17 and informed him that the German Government thanked the Pope for his intention of using his influence for peace but that they requested him to refrain from making the proposed appeal.<sup>2</sup> The Nuncio received this statement with the remark that he had expected an answer of this kind and would inform the Pope.

ERICH KORDT

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 331 and 372.

## No. 397

8001/E375658-59

*The Consul General at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 32 of May 16

GENEVA, May 17, 1939—6:05 p.m.

Received May 17—9:00 p.m.

Pol. V 4408.

Professor Burckhardt told me that the Committee of Three for Danzig<sup>1</sup> would probably not hold any formal meeting during the forthcoming session of the Council, as the Poles, in contrast to their former attitude, have now petitioned the members of the Committee of Three not to touch upon the Danzig question at all, to leave everything there in abeyance, and also to take no decision on the resumption of his duties by the High Commissioner in Danzig. The High Commissioner explained Poland's present intention to leave the Danzig question open by the fact that Poland believed that she would come off badly in the present negotiations with Germany and that thus<sup>2</sup>. . . . the realization of old, hitherto deferred hopes, which are now receiving fresh impetus, of an ultimate and complete incorporation of Danzig and East Prussia would be rendered more difficult.

Professor Burckhardt is now determined that, in the informal discussions between members of the Committee of Three which will of course take place during the meeting of the Council, he will not comply with a suggestion put to him by Britain about a fortnight ago that he should hand in his resignation on personal or factual grounds, but will leave the decision on his further work as High Commissioner to the Committee of Three alone.<sup>3</sup> If neither the Committee of Three (that is Great Britain and France) nor Poland are willing to take the responsibility for a decision on Danzig, Burckhardt will advocate a postponement of the whole problem, as, in his opinion, this would best correspond to the present situation and the methods of the League of Nations.

Halifax has recently let Burckhardt know that he wishes to see him immediately on his arrival in Geneva to give him a full account of the British attitude to the Danzig question and the general political situation. I have received, through a reliable intermediary, confirmation from the Polish Mission here that Poland will not now bring up the Danzig question. Polish representatives have moreover expressed

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 124, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> The text is corrupt here. A typewritten note on the copy reads: "'prevented' has come through".

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 336.

themselves very pessimistically in the League of Nations Secretariat over Poland's situation, since in the Polish view a clash with Germany is inevitable, as, given the excited mood of Polish public opinion and of the military party, Beck can make no concessions to Germany. The guarantee Treaty with Britain, they say, will only result in the outbreak of a European war, in which Poland will be left without effective help from Britain and will perish, crushed between Germany and Russia.

KRAUEL

## No. 398

2261/475847

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 228 of May 17

BUCHAREST, May 17, 1939—7 p.m.

Received May 18—4 a.m.

At Colonel Gerstenberg's audience with King Carol yesterday, the latter again expressed his desire to see Gerstenberg permanently in Bucharest as Air Attaché. This was particularly important at the present stage of Rumania's air rearmament. The King was intending to ask for German instructors for specialized air force equipment to come to Rumania. The chief thing was that the Reich should carry out the Economic Treaty<sup>1</sup> in respect of the delivery of armaments; he, the King, was resolved to carry through Rumania's great air rearmament programme in conjunction with Germany.

I should like to express my warm approval of the King's suggestion, and to propose that arrangements should be made without delay for Colonel Gerstenberg to assume immediately, as Air Attaché and advisor, the permanent supervision of the air rearmament of the Rumanian Army. A weighty point is that Gerstenberg enjoys the confidence of authoritative military quarters here, and that in my opinion the arming of the Rumanian Army by Germany constitutes a decisive factor in the shaping of Rumania's relations with the Reich and in the implementation of the Wohlthat Treaty.<sup>1</sup>

I would also like to observe that the King's suggestion came spontaneously. This again shows the desire for cooperation with Germany, although Rumania's political situation has naturally become more difficult as a result of the Anglo-Turkish Alliance.<sup>2</sup> The French Air Attaché<sup>3</sup> has been very active lately, which has been rendered especially noticeable by the arrival of technical experts from the French Air Ministry. The Italians are also becoming more active.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> Of Mar. 23, 1939. See document No. 78.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12. See Editors' Note on p. 483.

<sup>3</sup> Colonel de Sévin.

## No. 399

8464/E585857

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 275 of May 17

PARIS, May 17, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received May 17—4:20 p.m.

On the visit of Kasprzycki,<sup>2</sup> I hear that a French military delegation is to leave for Poland possibly as early as next week. Differences are still said to exist within the Ministries as to whether the delegation shall have an official or unofficial character; Bonnet is said to favour the latter for the time being. The main Polish desires are said to be deliveries of material, especially heavy artillery, as the last partial mobilization in Poland revealed insufficient stocks of material both in quantity and quality, a fact which can be partly ascribed to bad management. A further question is the route by which material purchased is to be transported to Poland. As the route via Gdynia is too unsafe, transport via Rumania is being considered.

The further delay in the Anglo-Soviet negotiations is said to have made a strong impression on the Polish delegation who have even expressed doubts whether Russia would be prepared in an emergency to supply material even against payment in cash.

I am continuing my confidential enquiries.<sup>3</sup>

WELCZECK

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> General Kasprzycki, Polish Minister of War. In a despatch from Warsaw of May 16 (not printed, 8464/E595855-56), Moltke had reported a semi-official announcement that the General was paying a "non-official visit to Paris on military matters"; he was accompanied by the French Military Attaché in Warsaw and by representatives of the Polish War Ministry. See also Gamelin: *Servir* (Paris, 1946), vol. II, pp. 413-423, and Beck: *Dernier Rapport, Politique Polonaise 1926-1939* (Paris, 1951), pp. 345-346.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 288 of May 24 (not printed, 1796/408844) and despatch No. A 2090 of May 30 (not printed, 2846/551241) Welczeck added some further details, derived from usually well-informed agents, on these conversations. See also document No. 482.

## No. 400

174/135045-46

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, May 17, 1939—7:50 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Received May 17—5:35 p.m.

No. 206 of May 17

For the State Secretary.

With reference to your telegram No. 158 of May 15.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 382.

I utilized the arguments in this telegram in a talk with General Machijiri, Head of Central Department and personal assistant of the War Minister. The General said that the conclusion of the Italo-German Alliance had not had a prejudicial effect either on the Army or on the other groups concerned. The Navy, it is true, concluded from this that more time was left to the Government here for reaching a final decision. The General promised that the Army would do all in their power to speed up the Japanese decision, but emphasized the Navy's obstinate attitude, which he knew very well, being a regular participant in discussions with them. The dispute obviously still turns on the beginning, form, and scope of the assistance to be rendered. Although the Navy allegedly assent to the commitment in Article III<sup>2</sup> of the draft pact, they wish to reserve to themselves the choice of date for an attack on enemy forces. I have now also handed the General our views in writing in accordance with paragraph 3 of telegram No. 143 of May 1<sup>3</sup> in order to lend support to the Army in overcoming opposition from the Navy. The General asked tentatively whether publication of the pact was absolutely necessary. On my affirming this categorically he ventilated the following misgivings expressed by the Navy. The reconstruction, reorganization and reinforcement of armaments in the Navy and Army were prerequisites for effective assistance in the future. For this the Navy in particular were urgently dependent on Britain and America for raw materials and machinery. The Navy feared that deliveries would be jeopardized in the event of publication. I pointed out that the feeble reaction by the Powers to the Navy's unhesitating action in China (Hainan, Amoy)<sup>4</sup> did not justify this caution. Another Cabinet meeting is arranged for today. I recommend that a friendly gesture of reply should be made by the Führer through the Japanese Ambassador to the Minister President, whose desire for an alliance and whose influence in favour of a final decision are constantly being emphasized by the Army. At the same time a hint might be given that we desire the matter to be speeded up.

OTT

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 383.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 304.

<sup>4</sup> On May 12, 1939, Japanese marines had been landed at the International Settlement of Kulangsu, a small island off Amoy. This action led to protests from the British, French and United States representatives and to the despatch of naval units. The Japanese marines were gradually withdrawn.

## No. 401

1625/388745-46

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, May 17, 1939—10:10 p.m.

No. 177 of May 17

Received May 18—2:10 a.m.

Pol. II 1716.

With reference to my telegram No. 176 of May 15.<sup>1</sup>

The British Government's intention, reported in my previous telegram, of bringing about a continuation of the negotiations with the Soviet Government by talks between Halifax and Potemkin, has been frustrated by Soviet Russia's counter move of sending Ambassador Maisky instead of Potemkin.<sup>2</sup> The British Government are now considering the despatch of a reply in writing.

According to information I have received from a reliable source, the Soviet Government, in their reply reported in telegram No. 176, proceeded from the following assumption: if, for example, Germany should undertake a lightning attack on the Corridor and Danzig, and then continue at the same pace against the Baltic States, Soviet Russia would be committed to giving assistance to Poland. According to the British proposals, Soviet Russia would, it is true, only be required to enter the war if France and Britain were already at war with Germany. By then, however, the Polish Government would quite possibly be prepared to conclude a separate peace with Germany, which would be approved, though perhaps reluctantly, by the two Western Allies. Soviet Russia would then be left facing Germany alone, and exposed to the latter's vengeance, without being able to count on assistance from France and Britain. The proposals advanced by Britain weighted the account heavily against Soviet Russia by comparison with the Western Powers: France and Britain would hardly launch an attack on the German Western defences, just as Germany was not likely ever to attack the Maginot Line. The war in the West would therefore inevitably be confined to air operations, while the army would march and fight battles in the East.

On the British side there is still a desire to avoid the alliance with Soviet Russia, primarily in order not to place the decision over peace and war in Soviet Russian hands. It seems, however, that the following proposals are taking shape in the "Foreign Office".<sup>3</sup>

The British Government are also to promise the Soviet Government

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 381.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., to the League of Nations Council meeting where Maisky was Chairman.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.



assistance in the event of Soviet Russia becoming the object of a German attack in fulfilment of the commitments she has voluntarily accepted towards her border States. Thus Soviet Russia's fear of possibly being left alone in a war with Germany would be dispelled without a formal alliance having to be concluded.

This line of thought includes further concessions to Soviet Russia's wishes. It is also still by no means certain that it has the approval of the British Cabinet.

DIRKSEN

## No. 402

8131/E582056

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 107 of May 17

WARSAW, May 17, 1939—10:40 p.m.

Received May 18—2:30 a.m.

Pol. V 4413.

I have today caused serious representations to be made to the Polish Foreign Ministry through the Counsellor of Embassy concerning the extraordinarily grave excesses against the German population in Tomaszow, of which you have been informed by reports from the Consulate at Lodz.<sup>1</sup> The Acting Director of the Western Department states that the incidents were certainly due to the overheated atmosphere created by the tension in foreign affairs, but the Polish Government had the greatest interest in preventing such occurrences. For this reason appropriate instructions had been given a long time ago already to the proper administrative authorities, which instructions had been renewed in a more peremptory form when the news from Tomaszow was received. He was of the opinion, therefore, that everything had been done on the part of the Polish Government to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.<sup>2</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>1</sup> With its reports of May 15 (not printed, 8131/E582041-55) and May 18 (not printed, 8131/E582061-65) the Consulate at Lodz enclosed records and summaries of statements made by witnesses of the Tomaszow incident.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 563, and the *French Yellow Book*, No. 128.

## No. 403

2422/611750-80

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 980

WASHINGTON, May 17, 1939.

Received June 5.

Pol. IX 1238.

Subject: The foreign policy of Roosevelt in the event of a European war, in particular a war between Germany and Britain.

When the United States Congress two years ago passed the so-called Neutrality Act,<sup>1</sup> this expressed, in spite of all shortcomings, the wish of the American people if possible to keep out of a European conflict. Although the Act did not deserve its name in that it was based on a scarcely concealed preference for Britain and France as dominant sea powers, nevertheless Congress evidently strove to remove all elements of danger which might make possible a repetition of America's period of neutrality from 1914 to 1917, with the resultant participation in the World War. The isolationist idea seemed to have won the day. There was readiness to give far-reaching support, by means of the "cash and carry" system to Britain and France, and this at the expense of Germany or Italy, in a war against the totalitarian Powers, considered inevitable even two years ago, but, as a result of experiences in the World War, any active intervention was declined.

This attitude still predominates among the American people today. Various sample polls by the Institute of Public Opinion have shown that while the average American is quite prepared to give any conceivable economic support to the "Democracies", whom he wishes victorious, he rejects the idea that America should again take the field to make the world "safe for democracy". This feeling shows itself equally clearly in Congress.

Roosevelt and with him the State Department for reasons frequently reported by the Embassy have for the last two years opposed the Neutrality Act and isolationism with growing determination and steadfastness of purpose. They take the view they have often emphasized that, as a Great Power, America has a duty to take her part in world politics, and they regard the Neutrality Act, and the underlying policy of the isolationists, as tantamount to emasculating America's influence in the world. In addition Roosevelt and his foreign policy advisers are imbued with an unbridled hatred of the totalitarian Powers and their political successes, and they regard the Neutrality Act as an obstacle that must be removed, so that their hands may not be tied when the decisive moment comes.

<sup>1</sup> In 1937; see *Peace and War*, No. 83.

The methods used to achieve this objective are as subtle as they are revealing. Roosevelt himself has never stated his opposition to the existing Neutrality Act openly and bluntly; he has only gone as far as to hint, in his message to Congress of January 4,<sup>2</sup> that the conception of neutrality could not be formulated in legal terms and that the present Act created a situation which in certain circumstances favoured the aggressor instead of the victim. But everything has been done to water down the Act and to undermine the isolationist attitude of the American people. The White House has mobilized its confidants, both in the Senate and in the House of Representatives; tenaciously and bit by bit they have removed the principle of isolationism from the Neutrality Act. The "cash and carry" clause which expired on May 1 has so far not been renewed and a return to the pseudo-neutrality of international law with certain safeguards for American shipping seems imminent. In the bills of pro-Government members of Congress an embargo on the export of munitions and war supplies is already no longer referred to.

Side by side with these sorties in Congress, which the isolationists ward off bitterly, public opinion is being systematically worked on, and Roosevelt himself plays a leading part in this. He has again and again sounded public feeling by means of speeches and pronouncements and is only waiting for the moment when he has the masses where he wants them, namely in a state of fanatical, blind hatred of the totalitarian Powers, which makes calm reflection impossible. In this Roosevelt has the support of the close circle of his Jewish and pro-Semitic confidants in public and behind the scenes and there is no doubt that they draw their inspiration from him. From the quarantine speech in Chicago<sup>3</sup> to his ominous utterance in Georgia: "I'll be back in the fall if we don't have a war" there runs like a thread the effort to promote the idea that when the hour of decision strikes, America must be at the side of Britain and France as their natural ally. Speeches and actions complement each other consistently; let me recall the secret sales of aircraft to France,<sup>4</sup> the imposition of countervailing duties against Germany,<sup>5</sup> the reference to the frontier in France made to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs in secret session,<sup>6</sup> the announcement of "measures short of war". Public opinion did not always go with him willingly, and at times propaganda had to be slowed down, but its fruits are nonetheless gradually ripening, the more so as the

<sup>2</sup> See *Peace and War*, No. 124.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.*, No. 93.

<sup>4</sup> On Jan. 27, 1939, the President had stated in a press conference that aircraft were being purchased by the French Government in the United States.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 58.

<sup>6</sup> Reports on what President Roosevelt was alleged to have said to this Committee had appeared in the press on Feb. 1, 1939. At a press conference on Feb. 3, the President had characterized reports that he had said "America's frontier is on the Rhine" or had "called France America's frontier" as a deliberate lie.

anti-German feeling in the United States, which has greatly increased since the events of November and which is actively fostered by Jewish and clerical circles, offers a particularly favourable field of activity. No one realizes this better today than the opposition leaders. Both Borah<sup>7</sup> and Landon<sup>8</sup> have raised their voices in warning that under Roosevelt America has not only abandoned the idea of neutrality, but that in nearly all respects she is already deeply entangled in the net of European conflicts.

In order to undermine isolationist counter propaganda Roosevelt and the supporters of his foreign policy are availing themselves of all possible dialectic means. It has been realized that the American people will not again let themselves be taken in by the bogus cry of a threat to democracy, especially as there is no concealing the fact that the strangest of bed-fellows have conspired to encircle the totalitarian Powers; that is why the watchword now being given out is that it is the duty of all "decent" Powers—including Soviet Russia—to put an end to the lawlessness and brutality of the "disturbers of peace", if necessary by force. And in order to put them irrevocably in the wrong, the so-called peace appeal of April 20 was made.<sup>9</sup> This appeal was at the same time to strike a blow at the isolationist opposition at home.

Thus public opinion is being systematically reduced to a state of trance in which the proposition that it is inevitable that war will break out and that America will become involved is being given the force of an axiom. Only two years ago the American people would not have allowed themselves to be forced into such a fatalistic attitude in the field of foreign policy. Today, contrary to their own interests and all considerations of reason, they seem to be exposed to the striving for power of one man, who has adopted the old slogans of collective security and the indivisibility of peace in order to make himself the champion of the *status quo* on the model of the Treaty of Versailles which was rejected by America.

As these observations show, American foreign policy today is very closely bound up with the person of Roosevelt. It is no exaggeration to say that it stands or falls with him. It will also determine our attitude to America for the duration of Roosevelt's term of office. The question therefore arises with all the force of logic, as to what America will do should a European war, especially a war between Britain and Germany, break out within the next year and a half. Will America confine herself to economic assistance on the largest scale? Will she at once enter the war against Germany on the side of Britain? What

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<sup>7</sup> Senator William E. Borah, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee 1924-1933.

<sup>8</sup> Alfred M. Landon, Governor of Kansas, 1933-1937, and Republican nominee for President of the United States in 1936.

<sup>9</sup> Actually dated Apr. 15. See document No. 200.

is the state of her preparations for the event of war? With what means will she take an active part in a war? What forces can she commit? Will an expeditionary force be sent to Europe? How does America assess the strategic position in the Far East? What opposition forces will come into play against participation in a war? What will be the attitude of Congress, which, under the Constitution, has to decide on peace or war?

In attempting to answer these questions, an imponderable factor must be considered; this is the mentality of the American people, namely their emotional excitability to which I referred in my report No. 556 of March 27.<sup>10</sup> Previous accounts show that Roosevelt well knows how to play on this instrument. He has been drumming the idea of "war" into the American people for so long that it has, as it were, passed into their subconscious mind.

It has been stated at the beginning that, in so far as their mood can be ascertained, the majority of the American people are thoroughly in favour of supplying the "peace-loving nations" to the greatest possible extent with everything necessary for waging war without giving any thought to the possible consequences of this. The Embassy reports have stressed over and over again that America's entire economic and probably her financial might too will be available, if Britain and France find themselves engaged in a life and death struggle with the totalitarian Powers. The leaders of the isolationist movement realize that to supply the "Democracies" in this way must sooner or later, just as in 1917, result in America being drawn into the war, and they have therefore tried by means of the Neutrality Act to put off this eventuality as far as possible, if not to avert it altogether. They are also determined, therefore, to oppose with all parliamentary means the repeal or the rendering innocuous of the Neutrality Act. They may succeed in gaining temporary successes by means of obstruction, but—as has often been stressed—it must not be forgotten that parliamentary means fail in times of extreme national tension and when national feeling runs high. Therefore level-headed isolationists too are opposed to a referendum for reaching a decision on war or peace because once already they have learned from experience that under the pressure of warmongering the people dictate the attitude of their representatives in Congress. Those members of Congress who in 1917 had the courage to vote against war know that also in present conditions a referendum among the excited masses would have the opposite result to that intended by this measure, namely to exert a moderating and retarding influence.

The policy hitherto pursued by the President leaves it hardly in any doubt that he is determined not to wait until America becomes a

<sup>10</sup> Document No. 107.

participant in the war as a result of her entanglement with the belligerents, but in the event of war breaking out between Germany and Britain to espouse Britain's cause at a moment to be determined by himself. Roosevelt, however, thinks it possible that Britain and France may succumb to the onslaught of the totalitarian Powers in the early weeks of the war before they are in a position to mobilize all their forces for resistance and, for their part, to go over to a war of attrition. In Roosevelt's view this danger must be prevented at all costs. His temperament, combined with his unbridled hatred of the totalitarian Powers, will not allow America to enter upon a period of waiting while Britain and France, although enjoying the fullest material support from America, are nevertheless in danger of being defeated because the full weight of the United States has not yet made itself felt. This weight is made up of two factors: the moral and the military.

Roosevelt certainly realizes that military aid by the United States with their forces and weapons is out of the question at first, i.e., for the first year of war. In the event of mobilization the American Army is to be brought up to one million men in the course of a year. There is no equipment, arms, or implements of war for this army. If, as is expected, universal conscription is introduced, the entire American war industry will be so fully employed as to make large scale deliveries of military equipment and arms to the democracies impossible. The American Navy is fully committed in the Pacific; even the main units of the Atlantic squadron have recently been despatched to the west coast. America's own fleet, therefore, will not be available at first for convoying American troops to Europe, and it is questionable whether the American Government would entrust the transport of American troops by sea—if they sent them at all—to the protection of another navy. The Air Force is being built up; it will be a considerable time before the achievements of other nations both in skill and numbers can be matched. There is an insufficient number of pilots, and a shortage of trained mechanics on the ground staff and in the aircraft factories. There is no provision for the transport of American air squadrons to fronts outside America, because in the event of mobilization America's bases would have to be put into a state of defence. The American armament industry is now being geared for its coming tasks; if war breaks out within the next twelve months it will be substantially less up to the mark and less capable of production than it was in the World War after three years' preparation. Coordination, stock-piling and economic planning for an emergency are still in their initial stages.

Assuming that all these shortcomings are not unknown to Roosevelt, and taking them in conjunction with the political situation in the Pacific area which has changed as compared with 1917, one cannot but wonder what is the purpose of his many recent speeches and hints, from which Britain and France have naturally been able to

draw their own conclusions. Thus in the House of Lords, on April 13, Lord Halifax went so far as to claim the support of American public opinion for the objectives of Britain's encirclement policy.<sup>11</sup> The visit of the British King and Queen to America<sup>12</sup> will serve to consolidate a relationship which for all practical purposes already amounts to an alliance, and which American patriots are opposing apparently to no avail—in speech and writing. From all this one can only assume that the American people are to be systematically prepared for the fact that America's entry into a European war may possibly take place with lightning suddenness.

Roosevelt it is true told a number of newspaper publishers in a confidential discussion about which nothing has appeared in the press, that as long as he was President, not one American soldier would be sent overseas "to fight somebody else's war";<sup>13</sup> it is nevertheless quite conceivable that Roosevelt was making some mental reservation when saying this, in view of the feeling in the country, which is strongly opposed to the 1917 experiment, as far as the despatch of an American expeditionary force is concerned. It might, however, be more probable that he himself is not thinking of the possibility or necessity of sending American troops to Europe, in any case in the initial stages of American participation in the war.

Therefore the only conclusion left is that after the outbreak of war between Britain and Germany Roosevelt personally will endeavour to come to the aid of our opponents as quickly as possible with the full moral weight of the United States by creating the conditions for, and by a skilful timing of, the entry into the war on their side. He probably expects that America's taking sides with them early on will have a devastating effect on morale in the totalitarian States and—even if military aid from America can only be forthcoming after some considerable time—will be bound to result in demoralization and loss of prestige for Germany and her Allies. Roosevelt hopes that these political objectives will also induce those Powers who, on the outbreak of a European war, might at first adopt an attitude of wait and see, to range themselves against the totalitarian States. By introducing the moral support of America in war as a decisive factor in world politics he believes that he is contributing towards the active solidarity of all the "peace-loving" Powers and towards paving the way for their victory and that he is vindicating his own claim to leadership.

If such a development has to be reckoned with today, the question

<sup>11</sup> In a statement on the invasion of Albania Lord Halifax said: "It is not necessary for me to take up your Lordships' time by stating at length what must be the judgment of His Majesty's Government on these events. That judgment has been shared by the overwhelming mass of opinion in this country, by most of the States of Europe, and by the United States of America." See *Parl. Deb., H. of L.*, vol. 112, col. 611.

<sup>12</sup> On June 7-12, 1939.

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 267.

arises whether the President's impulsiveness and autocratic methods have not led him into making his calculations without taking the unknown factors into account. He may indeed be of the opinion that, thanks to her geographical position, America will on her Eastern side only be exposed to the relatively trivial danger of isolated actions and, for the rest, that the lives of American soliders need not be committed at first, and possibly not until a decision has been reached in Europe; nevertheless what may happen in the Pacific area if and when Japan takes advantage of a European war to extend her sphere of influence seems to play a subordinate part in the President's calculations, although the authorities called upon to study this question have probably not failed to give him their opinion. Even if the American fleet were to confine itself in such an event to defensive action in the modern sense, a war with Japan would, apart from the enormous cost, be an uncertain undertaking during which America's striking power might be so greatly impaired through losses at sea as to have an extremely prejudicial effect on the commitment of American forces in Europe.

In my report of March 27 I described the attitude of a large section of the American public to Roosevelt's war policy. Under the constitution the decision to enter a war rests exclusively with Congress. Will Congress be in a position to oppose an entry into the war provoked by Roosevelt, or can the President by skilful tactics confront Congress with a *fait accompli*? The history of the United States shows that the latter eventuality is not just Utopian. The wars with Britain (1812) and Mexico (1846) were deliberately started by Presidents Madison and Polk against the will of Congress. In both cases Congress had no choice but to approve subsequently the order for hostilities given by the President in his capacity of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and thus to recognize the existence of a state of war. The same kind of thing could also happen today, especially if public opinion were sufficiently roused by true or falsified reports of acts of provocation or incidents. Roosevelt will not neglect the possibility that as Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces he has the power to issue orders which in the course of their execution might lead to the creation of a state of war. In face of this Congress is powerless. Once things have gone so far the silencing of all the President's opponents will only be a matter for the administration or the police.

These dangers are realized by all thinking American patriots. They are therefore fighting above all against Roosevelt's re-election in 1940. But, as I pointed out in my report No. 862 of May 11,<sup>14</sup> Roosevelt's election for a third term is by no means out of the question especially if the foreign political situation continues to deteriorate; and further-

<sup>14</sup> Not printed (49/32852-58). This report deals with the domestic political situation and its bearing on foreign policy, the tactics of the political parties and the prospects of their candidates.



more he still has more than a year and a half until the election, during which time he can exercise the powers of his office with ruthlessness and arrogance—even against the advice of his political and military experts.

We can expect no objectivity from this man who—as has reliably become known here—has gone so far in his pathological hatred of the leaders of Germany and Italy as to declare (before the members of the Senate Committee on Military Affairs who had previously been bound to secrecy) that it would be a good thing if they were assassinated. Roosevelt rather seems resolved not only to join in Britain's policy of encirclement, but to exercise a decisive influence on it. The *leitmotiv* of Roosevelt's policy is America's participation in another war of annihilation against Germany.

THOMSEN

## No. 404

2886/565449-50

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 436

BERLIN, May 17, 1939.

Pol. VI 1273a.

The Danish Minister brought me today his Government's answer to our offer of a non-aggression pact.

M. Zahle started by referring to his conversation of April 28 with the Reich Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> then apologized for the time taken by the deliberations until today's answer, and referred to the Stockholm communiqué.<sup>2</sup>

I interrupted the Minister with the remark that we had not taken note of the Stockholm communiqué and that, indeed, it did not concern us. The Minister then read me the attached Pro Memoria.<sup>3</sup>

My reply to this was that after a first hearing of the Danish answer, to which I reserved a possibly fuller German reply, I would first like to observe that the German Government would certainly note with satisfaction the positive tone of the concluding phrases of his Pro Memoria. As to the preceding observations, which seemed to me somewhat digressive, I desired to point out that the step we had taken

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 284.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 358, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2886/565451-52). In their Pro Memoria the Danish Government defined Danish policy in the terms employed in the Stockholm communiqué and concluded with the words: "Denmark, being firmly convinced that she can proceed on the assumption that Germany attaches importance to Denmark maintaining her attitude of impartiality towards groupings of the Powers, has, on the present occasion, taken note of the expression of Germany's desires in respect of Denmark's neutrality, integrity and independence. The Danish Government are prepared to enter into negotiations with the German Government over a non-aggression pact, which expresses the determination of both countries not to resort to force against one another."

towards Denmark amounted not to a collective, but to a bilateral proposal and that we wished to proceed on a purely Berlin-Copenhagen course. All the same I felt compelled to observe that the Danish Government gave for their acceptance of our offer a reason precisely similar to that contrived by Finland,<sup>4</sup> for instance, for refusing it. The situation was not without a certain comic element. In the Danish answer we appreciated the logical and correct conclusion which the Danish Government had drawn from their deliberations.

The Minister then handed me a communiqué<sup>5</sup> which was to be published in Copenhagen early on Friday the 19th. I reserved any reply regarding the communiqué and it was agreed to make no public announcement without getting in touch with us again.

Finally, I handed the Minister the draft of a non-aggression pact drawn up by us and already previously communicated to M. Zahle orally, and added, among the requisite elucidations, the supplementary proposals made in the meantime to Estonia and Latvia,<sup>6</sup> insofar, that is, as they are related to the duration of the treaty and to its renewal, as well as to the interpretation of the obligations arising out of Article 1, paragraph 2, of the draft treaty which deals with the exchange of goods.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 391.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (8004/E575678).

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 390.

## No. 405

2102/455435

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, May 17, 1939.  
zu Pol. V 4302.<sup>1</sup>

In an official report<sup>1</sup> and in the enclosed private letter of May 13<sup>2</sup> to Herr Bergmann, the Consul at Lwów reports on the attitude of the Ukrainians in Poland and suggests that, following an approach made to him by a go-between, some declaration of German goodwill towards the Ukrainians there should be made.

It seems to me that the Consul should at all events make no statements in the name of the German Government, but only personal statements,<sup>3</sup> namely an expression in very general terms of goodwill towards the striving for autonomy and, underlying this, for independence. Anti-Hungarian statements, above all an express condemnation

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2102/455428-30). This report by Consul Seeles dealt with the prospects of the Poles making a promise of autonomy to the Ukrainians within Poland.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2102/455431-34).

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "indirect".

of atrocities in the Carpatho-Ukraine, should be avoided.<sup>4</sup> On the question of the autonomy of the Carpatho-Ukraine within Hungary the Consul might say that we have received from Hungary the communications<sup>5</sup> of which you have knowledge and on the contents of which he would have to be given detailed information.

Submitted herewith to

State Secretary Keppler<sup>6</sup>

for State Secretary Freiherr von Weizsäcker  
with request for approval.

WOERMANN

<sup>4</sup> In a despatch of July 29 (not printed, 2102/455439-40) Woermann instructed Seelos accordingly, adding that he might mention the great part played by Germany in securing better treatment for the [Carpatho-] Ukrainian opposition from the Hungarians.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "I agree with the proposal, which must naturally be carried out cautiously. Ke[ppler]. 19.5."

## No. 406

393/211504-05

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, May 17, 1939.  
e.o. W IV 1870.

The Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Counsellor of Embassy Astakhov, called on me today in order to talk to me about the legal status of the Soviet Trade Commission in Prague, established there on the basis of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Trade Agreement of 1935.<sup>1</sup> The Soviet Union wants to leave the Trade Commission in Prague as a section of the Soviet Trade Delegation in Berlin and requests that it be given temporarily the same legal status as it had under the Soviet-Czechoslovak Trade Agreement. M. Astakhov invoked the German declaration<sup>2</sup> according to which the present Czechoslovak trade agreements would continue to be applied to the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia until something new had replaced them.

I took note of this request and promised an early answer. I told him as my personal opinion that there would hardly be any objections to the Soviet request.

During the subsequent conversation Astakhov again referred in great detail to the development of German-Soviet relations as he had already done two weeks ago.<sup>3</sup> He remarked that for some weeks the German press had presented quite a different picture. The attacks

<sup>1</sup> The Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, signed at Prague, Mar. 25, 1935. For the text see *League of Nations Treaty Series*, 1935-1936, vol. CLXI, No. 3718, pp. 258-307.

<sup>2</sup> No record of such a declaration to Moscow has been found; see document No. 71, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 332.

hitherto directed against the Soviet Union could no longer be noted and reports were objective; in a Rhineland industrial newspaper he had even seen photographs of Soviet installations. Of course, it was impossible to judge on the Soviet side whether this was only a temporary break introduced for tactical reasons. However, it was hoped that a permanent state of affairs would result from it. Astakhov stated in detail that there were no conflicts in foreign policy between Germany and the Soviet Union and that therefore there was no reason for any enmity between the two countries. It was true that in the Soviet Union there was a distinct feeling of being menaced by Germany. It would undoubtedly be possible to eliminate this feeling of being menaced and the distrust in Moscow. During this conversation he also again mentioned the Treaty of Rapallo.<sup>4</sup> In reply to my incidental question he commented on the Anglo-Soviet negotiations to the effect that, as they stood at the moment, the result desired by Britain would hardly materialize.

To substantiate his opinion concerning the possibility of a change in German-Soviet relations, Astakhov repeatedly referred to Italy and stressed that the Duce even after the creation of the Axis had let it be known that there were no obstacles to a normal development of the political and economic relations between the Soviet Union and Italy.

In my replies I was reserved and induced Astakhov, by means of incidental remarks only, further to elaborate his viewpoint.<sup>5</sup>

SCHNURRE.

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<sup>4</sup> The Treaty between Germany and Russia for the Settlement of Questions arising out of the War between the two Countries, signed at Rapallo, Apr. 16, 1922. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 118, pp. 586-587.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "To be submitted to Minister Pacher and Counsellor Meyer-Heydenhagen, for information." In a minute dated May 22 (388/211506-07), Pacher (who had served as Austrian Minister to Moscow from 1930-1938 and was now serving in the German Foreign Ministry, as Senior Counsellor in Political Division V) wrote:

"On the memorandum on the statements of M. Astakhov, which go far beyond the limits of economic matters, I beg, in political respects, to make the following observations:

"Astakhov's assertion that 'there are no conflicts in foreign policy between Germany and the Soviet Union' is, in actual fact, just as unconvincing today as during the whole of the recent past. The purely external difference consists merely in that Moscow, at the present time, thinks that it requires to, and should, expose itself less than in the earlier phase. Moscow can, in the encirclement process, remain more in the background than hitherto because, in its opinion, this process has reached an optimum situation and it is sufficient to assure Poland (*vis-à-vis* Germany) and Turkey (*vis-à-vis* Italy) as to their previous anxieties, of their having their backs free in the East, while the danger to Poland's flank from Czecho-Slovakia has, in any case, disappeared. And Moscow considers that this attitude is indicated in order to prove that the respective assurances, which have undoubtedly been given in this connection to Poland, Turkey, and probably also to Rumania, are of practical value from the start. In reality there is no difference at all, because the Soviet Union would also previously (at least since 1937) only have fulfilled its alliance obligations in a European war with the greatest reserve; i.e., only fulfilled them in so far as its slender forces could have remained intact for the exploitation of world revolutionary possibilities after the war. The hope, with the help of a war between the 'capitalist States' to be able to endanger above all the National Socialist régime in Germany, remains the same in both phases and constitutes indeed the greatest conceivable 'conflict' with the Reich.

## No. 407

2886/565472-73

*The State Secretary to the Legations in Denmark, Norway,  
Sweden and Finland*

Telegram

To Copenhagen No. 78

To Oslo No. 61

To Stockholm No. 76

To Helsinki No. 81

BERLIN, May 18, 1939—5:00 p.m.

e.o. Pol. VI 1286

For information:

The four Scandinavian Ministers have—separately—communicated the following on the attitude of their Governments towards the question of the non-aggression pact:<sup>1</sup>

All four Governments welcome the intention manifested by Germany in the Führer's Reichstag speech and in the statements of the Reich Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> to respect the integrity and independence of their countries and for their part emphasize their respect for the integrity and independence of other countries and their desire to keep aloof from European groupings of Powers and wars. The Governments of Finland, Sweden and Norway declare that in view of this situation they do not regard a non-aggression pact with Germany as necessary. The Danish Government, while bringing forward the same arguments, are ready to enter into negotiations with us. The Finnish and Swedish Governments declare that they would attach a high value to a German-Danish non-aggression pact as an expression of both parties' interest in stability in Northern Europe.

I have reserved an ultimate expression of the views of the German Government, have rejected as incomprehensible the argument that the conclusion of a non-aggression pact would signify entanglement in Great Power political combinations and, in connection with the reference in

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 391 and 404.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 284.

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"To the above mentioned 'optimum situation' the Soviet Union has contributed to the best of its ability—in apparent contradiction to the assurances given to its immediate neighbours—by dragging out the negotiations with Britain by means of unfulfillable counter proposals and demands so that the danger of premature discouragement and relaxation in London has been avoided.

"What still remains to be done, so that the Western Powers will accept unreservedly the line agreed between Moscow and Warsaw (similarly also Bucharest and Ankara) and not withdraw to the standpoint of 'a war simply on account of Danzig', is now to be achieved by the threat of a German-Soviet *rapprochement*. For this reason I regard any, even an apparent, engagement in this Soviet manoeuvre as dangerous and harmful, even in the economic field alone."

the Pro Memoria to other Northern States, have stressed the fact of bilateral conversations.

Conversations with the Ministers here are still in progress about publication of such press communiqués as seem appropriate to us.<sup>3</sup> They would have to emphasize the view that Germany did not constitute a menace. Special mention will have to be made of the fact that the Northern States have declared that they do not feel themselves threatened by Germany.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> A German communiqué was issued through DNB on May 19 (not printed, 2886/565436). The Swedish, Finnish, and Norwegian Governments issued their own communiqués on the same day. In a memorandum, St.S. No. 450, of May 24 (not printed, 2886/565486) Weizsäcker recorded that the Norwegian Minister had enquired if there would be any objection to his Government's publishing their *aide-memoire* on the proposals (see document No. 391, footnote 3); this he had discouraged.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On May 18, Dirksen had a private conversation with Lord Halifax on Anglo-German relations, Danzig and the possibility of moderating press attacks. See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. V, Nos. 559 and 560. No record of these conversations has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.]

## No. 408

321/193085

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, May 19, 1939.

#### POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN GERMANY AND LITHUANIA

1) Since the cession of the Memel Territory,<sup>1</sup> Lithuania is making marked efforts to maintain good neighbourly relations with Germany. This also finds expression in the unimpeachable attitude of the Lithuanian press towards questions of European politics.

2) In spite of extremely strong Polish propaganda the Lithuanian Government show a strictly neutral attitude in the German-Polish dispute. The visit to Warsaw of the Supreme Commander, General Rastykis, the political effects of which were distinctly weakened by various statements of the Lithuanian Government,<sup>2</sup> cannot be interpreted as a leaning towards Poland. Hopes of regaining Vilna may well contribute to this Lithuanian attitude.

3) The sole cause for complaint lies in the ill-treatment of the German national group in Lithuania, which, during recent weeks,

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 311. In a report of May 12 (not printed, 8439/E594074-94) the Legation in Kovno forwarded a collection of Lithuanian press reports emphasizing the unpolitical character of Rastykis' visit and the need for Lithuanian neutrality.

has repeatedly been exposed to petty annoyances (fines, ban on assemblies, etc.). If the Reich Foreign Minister would raise the subject of these complaints, which have already been made by the German Minister in Kovno, with the Lithuanian Foreign Minister,<sup>3</sup> this would substantially facilitate our Minister in Kovno taking up energetically the question of the German minority in Lithuania at a later date.

GRUNDHEER

<sup>3</sup> Urbšys was in Berlin for the signature of the German-Lithuanian Economic Agreements on May 20. See documents Nos. 421 and 445.

## No. 409

621/250778-30

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Letter Telegram

No. 280 of May 20

PARIS, May 20, 1939.

Received May 21—10:00 a.m.

Pol. II 1752.

Subject: Conversation between Ambassador Count Welczeck and M. Bonnet.

A fortnight after my return,<sup>1</sup> during which time I had not called on the Foreign Minister, I thought it necessary to see Bonnet personally to despatch current business, in particular on stopping the expulsions<sup>2</sup> and to discuss questions of trade policy. Yesterday afternoon, therefore, I caused him to be informed that I held myself at his disposal for a conversation whenever he desired. Thereupon the answer was promptly returned that he requested me to come as soon as possible. The Foreign Minister expressed his pleasure at seeing me here again. I began by carrying out the instructions given me by the [Reich] Foreign Minister,<sup>3</sup> and spoke of the continuance of our treaties concluded with France and the furthering of our economic relations. We had nothing against France but could not help drawing attention to the dangers resulting from the encirclement policy towards Germany pursued in the last two months by Britain, and unfortunately followed by France, whereby France would have to bear the main burden of the struggle conjured up by Britain and make enormous sacrifice of life. A peaceful settlement of the Eastern questions, such as had still been

<sup>1</sup> Welczeck was recalled to Berlin on Mar. 20 (see document No. 25, footnote 2) and returned to Paris on May 6.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., expulsions of French citizens from Germany and *vice versa*. In a further telegram on this interview, No. 279 of May 20 (not printed, 7886/E570885-86), Welczeck reported that Bonnet had shown personal interest in the case of a M. Fombonne, a director of a firm in Hamburg. Welczeck recommended granting this request, the more so as Bonnet had previously successfully intervened in a number of cases concerning German citizens.

<sup>3</sup> No record of these instructions has been found.

felt necessary last autumn, had been frustrated or at least made harder by the bolstering up of Poland. Whether this policy was in the interests of peace I ventured to doubt. In view of the understanding for Germany's vital interests which Bonnet had so far displayed, I could not believe he would abandon this policy of peace overnight. Bonnet replied that he would never deviate from the main lines of his policy and would fight for peace to the very last. In spite of everything he held fast to the idea of bringing back cooperation with Germany, to grow closer as time went on. But we must not overlook the fact that the situation had fundamentally changed compared with September of last year. At Munich, where the Führer had scored a success unprecedented in history, it had been intended to build a new Europe based on cooperation, for there was only collaboration or domination, as Daladier had said in his last speech.<sup>4</sup> This dream had been completely shattered and it would take considerable time before people recovered from this shock to their confidence. Before March 15, it was unlikely that from here any great obstacles would have been put in the way of a settlement of the Eastern questions. Every realistic politician [*Realpolitiker*] had known, after Munich, that Czecho-Slovakia had been surrendered to Germany. If what was then created had proved untenable, this too could, after consultation with the other partners in the agreement, have been altered, but not in the space of a few months by an act of force. Otherwise there was really no point in signing treaties. These were not, as a rule, concluded for fair weather, but as a preventive and a safety vent for bad weather, to ward off storms.

Today, if I asked a workman in the town or a peasant in the country what he was going to the front for, each would know that he was not going to war on account of Danzig, but for the defence of very different interests. The man in the street had had enough of learning at any moment from the newspapers about a fresh *coup de force* and of living in constant unrest. After the failure of his policy conducted in the face of storms and breakers it was exceedingly difficult to put the warmongers out of business. It was naturally to their interest to pour oil on the flames everywhere, as at one time in Rumania which had turned to France for help. He hoped that we realized today that any new *coup de force* would inescapably unleash world war. Since the Führer had told Gafencu that, in his opinion, a war would result in Bolshevism, he (Bonnet) had become more confident, for we all wanted to avoid world, or even partial, Bolshevism. So far no war in history had proved to be a final solution. It was now a question of finding the way back to cooperation, and for this he was always ready in spite of the outcry of his many opponents. If I met with unfriendliness in the French

<sup>4</sup> At the opening session of the Chamber of Deputies on May 11.



press, where he had some influence, he asked me to tell him of the offending articles, and he would then remedy matters, as far as lay in his power. An arrangement must also be reached about the expulsions on either side; he had in several instances intervened personally for those expelled, as in the case of the apparently not altogether innocent correspondent of the *Essen Nationalzeitung*, in which he knew Field Marshal Göring to have an interest. He was therefore not folding his hands in his lap but was pursuing the path he considered right.

WELCZECK

### No. 410

174/185947

#### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, May 20, 1939—11:10 a.m.

No. 213 of May 20

Received May 20—11 p.m.

For the Reich Foreign Minister.

The War Minister has just had a written statement for the Reich Foreign Minister read out to me by General Majiri [*sic* ?Machijiri].<sup>1</sup> The following is a brief summary of its contents:

The Conference of Five Ministers had today arrived at a Japanese decision on the Military Pact. The Foreign Minister would inform the German Government on Sunday at the latest. The Army had secured agreement within the Services, had achieved acceptance of the demands in principle, and conceded some changes in wording. The Japanese Government hoped that agreement with Germany and Italy might be rapidly reached, as far as possible on this basis. The Army was striving for secret initialling, simultaneous with the signature of the Italo-German Pact, in order to establish the three-Power character of the alliance from the outset. Motivated by this the War Minister repeatedly expressed the urgent request that the Reich Foreign Minister might, with complete confidence in the sincerity of the Army and its ability to carry the field, overlook minor amendments to the German draft.

This impressive declaration emphasizes the firm resolve of the Army to make the alliance, like the earlier Anti-Comintern Pact, fully effective at home and abroad despite initial difficulties. Japanese history was said to show that Japan's approach to the conclusion of treaties was particularly cautious and hesitating but that, once treaties had been concluded, she abided by them very faithfully. In such a short time the Army had not been able to uproot completely the feelings of friendship for Britain

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 400.

fostered for many years, but, as the real driving force behind Japanese State policy, accepted full responsibility for the alliance idea gradually permeating all sections of the population.

From numerous indications I have gained the impression that today's Cabinet decision is final. The War Minister's statement bore the stamp of the most straightforward sincerity and was read out with solemn gravity.

OTT

### No. 411

43/29415

*Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, May 20, 1939.

#### CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

After his visit to the Wilhelmstrasse, the Danish Minister, Zahle, received the Berlin correspondent of the *Berlinske Tidende*, Herr Knudsen. In this conversation the Minister gave the following information:

The main opposition to a positive response by the Northern States to the German suggestion came from Sweden.<sup>2</sup> The Swedish Foreign Minister, the [?Social] Democrat Sandler, had exerted the strongest pressure on Munch, the Danish Foreign Minister, at the Conference in Stockholm, to prevent Denmark from marching out of step and letting it appear to outside observers as though the solidarity of the Northern States, maintained hitherto, had been broken. A remarkably negative attitude towards Germany could be observed in Sandler on that occasion. As Munch however persisted in his positive attitude, Sandler had, after the Stockholm Conference, done everything possible through the [? Social] Democratic organization to influence the Danish Minister President, the Social Democrat Stauning, also, in a negative direction so that he would drop the Foreign Minister, Munch. But this proceeding had proved unsuccessful as there were relations of complete confidence between Stauning and Munch.

The main charge made against Foreign Minister Munch, both in Stockholm and by the opposition in Denmark, was that, by sponsoring acceptance of the German proposals, he had become an involuntary accomplice of German propaganda, and had thereby dealt a heavy blow to the solidarity, hitherto maintained, of the Northern States.<sup>3</sup>

L[IKUS]

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]".

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 358.

<sup>3</sup> On a separate page which was apparently originally the second page of this memorandum, and which is dated May 19 (not printed, 43/29416), Likus noted a suggestion purporting to be Knudsen's own, although it should also be regarded as Minister Zahle's view, to the effect that an immense impression would be made in Scandinavia should Germany, at the conclusion of the non-aggression pact with Denmark, declare her recognition of the present Danish-German frontier.

## No. 412

174/135943-49

*Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 20, 1939.

The Japanese Counsellor of Embassy, Usami, called on me today. He began the conversation by saying that the Embassy had unfortunately not yet received any answer from Tokyo to their recent telegrams and had heard nothing at all about the state of affairs. The initialling of the Tripartite Pact on Monday<sup>1</sup> was therefore very improbable; however, they hoped shortly to receive at least a preliminary report from Tokyo on how matters stood there.

The real purpose of Mr. Usami's visit was, however, to learn something more detailed about the contents of the Italo-German Pact.<sup>2</sup> I told him that I could not give him details yet, basing myself on the fact that the text could only be regarded as final when it had received the *imprimatur* of the two Ministers. Mr. Usami then asked a number of particular questions to which I gave cautious and noncommittal answers. For example, he enquired about the duration of the Treaty, whereupon I told him that the Reich Foreign Minister had already told his Ambassador<sup>3</sup> that in view of the well-known policy of the Axis the Italo-German Pact could naturally not be limited to five years. He asked further whether the Italo-German Pact also contained a clause relating to joint conclusion of an armistice and peace. I said this was probable and then ended the conversation with the remark that, as the Embassy had already been informed, the Pact went somewhat further in its wording than the draft of the Tripartite Pact but tallied with it as regards fundamentals; it would therefore contain no surprises for Japan.

In conclusion Mr. Usami requested that the text of the Pact should be communicated to the Embassy confidentially as soon as this was possible; furthermore, he suggested that we might also inform Tokyo before they obtained the text from the press. For my part I implied that, as things stood, it would probably not be possible to communicate the text to the Embassy before Monday morning.

GAUS

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., May 22.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this Pact see document No. 426.

<sup>3</sup> No details of this conversation have been found, but see document No. 382.

## No. 413

96/107820-25

*Ambassador Papen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

BERLIN, May 20, 1939.

Enclosed is a copy of the memorandum which I have sent to the Reich Foreign Minister for his conversation with Count Ciano.<sup>1</sup>

With sincere greetings and Heil Hitler,

Yours respectfully,

PAPEN

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<sup>1</sup> Ribbentrop possibly made use of the arguments contained in this memorandum during Ciano's visit to Berlin on May 21. See the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of May 21, 1939.

[Enclosure]

*Copy*

BERLIN, May 20, 1939.

## MEMORANDUM

THE MILITARY-POLITICAL SITUATION OF TURKEY AND THE  
AXIS POWERS

In making the Declaration in the Chamber on May 12, 1939,<sup>2</sup> Turkey has left her previous political line of strict neutrality and has allied herself with the British group of Powers. This step means a complete shift of the balance in the eastern Mediterranean.

The close cooperation of the Axis Powers which has now been decided upon, makes an examination of the new situation, which interests both partners equally, essential. It is necessary to find a new common orientation towards British policy, in order to achieve co-ordination of the measures of both Axis Powers to meet the new situation created by the British-Turkish Pact.

How is this situation to be assessed in the case of a conflict between one of the Axis Powers and a country towards whom Britain has treaty obligations which would automatically cause Britain to take part in such conflict?

Turkey has abandoned her previous policy of strict neutrality because she feels her position as a European power threatened by Italy. The occupation and military consolidation of Albania as a "bridgehead" is of great value for the Axis Powers, as from there the "neutrality" of the Balkan States can in any case be secured. Also the creation of a British operations base in Greece can be answered with counter measures.

Further, the closing of the Dardanelles could be achieved by a rapid

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<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483.

operation via Salonica, thus excluding Russia from the Mediterranean and Britain from the Black Sea.

This operation is especially promising as long as the present state of fortifications is not substantially strengthened.

Holding the north bank of the Dardanelles will at any rate tie up strong forces (also with Yugoslavia and Rumania neutral) as the Russians can land as many forces as they wish north of the Chatalja line. Therefore, in the view of military experts, the decision in a war against Britain cannot be achieved by closing the Dardanelles alone. Britain would not be defeated if the Italian fleet succeeded in dominating the eastern Mediterranean and driving the British out of it.

In order to defeat Britain, she must be hit in her most vital point, in India.

To do this the Axis Powers must possess the *land bridge to India* (Syria-Palestine-access to Mosul).

Turkey, if she fights on the British side, will, however, always be in a position to prevent this with the main part of her forces south of the Taurus.

From this, it follows that the Axis Powers must attempt to lead Turkey back to her previous attitude of strict neutrality if we are not to be faced, in a possible conflict, with a very unfavourable military-political situation from the outset. As long as the definite pact with Britain has not been concluded, it appears possible by counter measures on our part to restrict the pact in its scope and duration.

How can this be done?

Turkey's attitude is, above all, based on the fear of losing her European position. If the Axis Powers (Italy) gave her the assurance that this is not threatened, she would then have no reason for continuing her alliance policy with Britain.

Turkey's complaints are directed almost exclusively against the Italian threat from the Dodecanese and primarily from Albania.

It appears possible:

(a) To disguise the development of the position in Albania, i.e., to agree with Turkey<sup>3</sup> on the strength of the effective occupation forces, as in the case of a conflict the necessary army units could quickly be brought over at any time.

(b) To ease the tension over the Dodecanese by entering into negotiations about the Islands of Castello Rosso or Castello Rizza, lying within the three mile zone, which Turkey wants and which are for Italy quite unimportant.<sup>4</sup>

(c) Turkey, as a *quid pro quo*, would have to reduce her troops in Thrace to peacetime strength.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Italy will not do this".

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "ditto".

(d) The Turco-British Declaration made to the Chamber anticipates, in its last point, the conclusion of similar arrangements with other Powers. Therefore the question should be studied as to whether a non-aggression pact could not be concluded between Italy and Turkey (reinforced by us if need be).<sup>5</sup> According to the present scope of the Turkish Declaration to the Chamber it would appear, however, that a non-aggression pact would be unacceptable to Turkey, as she has only pledged herself to assistance if Britain is attacked by a third Power in the Mediterranean. The offer of a non-aggression pact would, however, register Italy's goodwill and made it clear to public opinion in Turkey into what dangerous channels she had embarked. This moral effect alone might be sufficient to limit Turkey's responsibilities under the final pact.

Should the measures proposed not suffice to free Turkey from British leading strings, their non-acceptance would at any rate make it easier for us to get rid of the present heavy military engagements to Turkey.

In conclusion may be set down what it would represent for Germany should she be compelled to liquidate the powerful influence which she has built up in Turkey by twenty years of hard work, if the Italian-Turkish tension cannot be relieved:

(a) Delivery of war material: orders outstanding on May 1, 1939, involving RM 124,592,000, immediate loss on irrevocable guarantees and unsettled claims, RM 70,468,000.

(b) Apart from direct war equipment, contracts have been entered into for supplying equipment for military installations such as, e.g., the naval base at Gölçük,<sup>6</sup> an arsenal, oil tank installations, nitro-cellulose factories etc.; the guarantees for these supplies are unknown to me at the moment.

(c) The Turkish Army and Navy are being trained by German instructors and according to German rules.

(d) The whole cultural development of the country is being carried out in practically all spheres by German specialists.

(e) Turkish youth, as far as educated abroad, is, up to 80 per cent, attending German universities.

This shows that to break off our friendly relations must mean for Turkey a completely new orientation in all these spheres, and that, if the position we occupy is taken over in the future by Britain and France, our relations with the countries lying beyond Turkey too—Iraq, Persia, the Arabian world—will be mortally hit.

PAPEN

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "under reservation of the Turk[ish]-Eng[lish] treaty?"

<sup>6</sup> In telegram No. 127 of Apr. 22 (not printed, 8452/E595144) Kroil reported that a contract for the construction of a naval base at Gölçük had been given to a German industrial group on Apr. 21. A memorandum by Wiehl of July 28 (not printed, 96/107918-23) stated that it involved deliveries to the value of approximately RM 30 million.

## No. 414

103/111328

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 94

BERLIN, May 21, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

W

Today.

With reference to your telegram 73.<sup>2</sup> For the Ambassador personally.

On the basis of results so far of your discussions with Molotov we must now sit tight and wait and see if the Soviet Russians will speak more openly.

Please act accordingly until otherwise instructed, but telegraph as the occasion arises all useful reports and information reaching you and your appraisal of the situation.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> This telegram of May 20 (2208/474322) reads as follows: "Today I had more than one hour's conversation with Molotov and subsequently a short conversation with Potemkin. The result of the conversation with Molotov was that the Soviet Government considered economic negotiations as inopportune for as long as no 'political basis' for them had been found. My repeated and determined questions as to what the Soviet Government understood by 'political basis' Molotov repeatedly evaded by saying that both Governments would have to think about it. In the course of the conversation the old Soviet mistrust reappeared, as Molotov expressed the suspicion that our taking up the negotiations again was only a political game and not seriously intended; I contradicted this vigorously. I then asked Potemkin to try and see if he could not ascertain Molotov's line of thought in more concrete form. I have the impression that Molotov wants to play for time, does not want to engage himself to us at the moment, and wishes to leave to us the initiative in possible political proposals. It is reported here that Molotov will make a speech on foreign policy at the session of the Supreme Soviet that opens on May 25. Presumably this will throw some light on Soviet foreign policy. Schulenburg." For a fuller account of this interview see document No. 424.

## No. 415

585/242415-16

*The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 60 of May 20

SOFIA, May 21, 1939—2:00 p.m.

Received May 21—8:45 p.m.

King Boris received me today to accept my credentials, and detained me for an hour and a quarter in intimate conversation, with only the Minister President present.

Referring to a talk which I had with him, before I, as the last German, left Bulgaria after the collapse of October 1918, the King described to me in detail the difficult situation of his country. The essence of his

remarks was: Bulgaria's armament had just begun; so far she had no weapons but only prototypes. Consequently he and the Government must veer according to circumstances until Bulgaria became strong. His policy was frequently not understood, so that he was often severely criticized, even in his own country, where in the last few days the young people had repeatedly staged demonstrations because of the shooting of Bulgarian peasants in the Dobruja by the Rumanians. But if he marched now, Bulgaria could wage war for precisely two weeks. The defection of Turkey, which he had seen coming even before Italy's occupation of Albania, made Bulgaria's position still more difficult. He asked me to keep him informed on our interpretation of the Turkish problem, which would be most valuable to him.

The King repeatedly expressed his thanks for all that we had already done for Bulgarian rearmament, asked for the greatest possible consideration in the distribution of Czech supplies of arms, and also for some small submarines to defend Bulgaria's Black Sea coast.

In conclusion he asked me to convey his greetings to the Führer; he was happy if his modest birthday gift had given him pleasure. He asked me to tell the Reich Foreign Minister how glad he was that he, Herr von Ribbentrop, had been right in the predictions he had made during the last conversation they had had together in Berlin.<sup>1</sup> He also asked me to convey his greetings to Field Marshal Göring, he remembered with gratitude the hunting expedition in East Prussia during the critical days of last September.

RICHTHOFEN

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<sup>1</sup> King Boris visited Berlin on Sept. 24, 1938. No record of these conversations has been found.

## No. 416

8049/E578596-87

### *Circular of the Director of the Political Department<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, May 21, 1939.

Sent May 24.

e.o. Pol. V 4558.

In the night of May 20 to 21, on the Danzig-Polish border, in Danzig territory, near Kalthof, an incident took place in the course of which a Danzig national was shot dead without any reason by a Pole. Details of the incident may be seen from the account contained in Enclosure 1,<sup>2</sup> as well as from the copy of the Note of the President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig, Chodacki,

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the principal German Missions in Europe.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8049/E578596-98).



of May 21, 1939 (Enclosure 2)<sup>3</sup> and from the copy of a minute by Senate President Greiser on his discussion of the matter with the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig, of May 21, 1939 (Enclosure 3).<sup>4</sup>

In view of the fact that a number of foreign newspapers and foreign radio stations, in reports on the incident, have already adopted, and will probably continue to adopt, the Polish version, which is in contradiction to the facts, I would request that within the limits of the possible, using the material enclosed herewith, every effort should be made to have the truth of the situation made known to the official departments at your post as well as to the press there.

WOERMANN

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8049/E578588-91). This Note demanded an official Polish apology, compensation, and surrender of the person responsible for the shooting.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (8049/E578592-95).

## No. 417

52/34808

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, May 21, 1939.

On the Danzig-Polish frontier, near the frontier hamlet of Kalthof, last night, a national of the Danzig Free State was shot dead, for no reason, from the motor car of the Polish Diplomatic Mission in Danzig, the occupants of which were Counsellor of Legation Perkowski (Deputy Polish Commissioner-General in Danzig), Dr. Sziller of the Polish Railways Board in Danzig, a Polish Customs Inspector, and the chauffeur. Counsellor of Legation Perkowski and his companions had gone to Kalthof as a result of demonstrations by the German inhabitants of Kalthof against Polish Customs Inspectors living there. Owing to the intervention of the local police these demonstrations had already ended at 10:30 p.m. The Danzig national was not shot till 12:50 a.m.

The President of the Senate, Greiser, sent a Note of protest on the matter, a copy of which is attached,<sup>1</sup> to the Polish Diplomatic Representative early this morning. Thereupon, at the request of the Polish Diplomatic Representative, a conversation lasting about an hour took place between Herr Greiser and M. Chodacki, in which M. Chodacki asserted that the occupants of the Polish car concerned had been so threatened by the inhabitants of Kalthof and Marienburg that the chauffeur of the car had considered it necessary to fire two warning shots into the air. M. Chodacki denied that the Danzig national had been killed by shots from the car. The chauffeur of the car had in the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 416, footnote 3.

meantime gone to Poland on foot. The decision on the Danzig application that he should be extradited to Danzig must rest with the Polish Government.

Submitted herewith for the information of the State Secretary, the Under State Secretary, and the Deputy Director of the Political Department.<sup>2</sup>

BERGMANN

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<sup>2</sup> The document is stamped: "Submitted to the Foreign Minister".

## No. 418

8049/E578613-21

### *The Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig to the President of the Danzig Senate*<sup>1</sup>

Translation

DANZIG, May 21, 1939.

MR. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: I have the honour to bring the following to your knowledge:

When I received alarming news about disturbances in Kalthof which were directed against the Polish Customs Inspectors, and during which, it must be especially emphasized, there was no hesitation in resorting to firearms, bombs, and, most probably, hand grenades, the Acting Commissioner-General of the Republic of Poland in Danzig, M. Perkowski, informed Herr Regierungsrat Siegmund, on May 20, 1939, about 11 p.m., that he was going personally to Kalthof to establish the facts on the spot. Herr Siegmund asked M. Perkowski whether he wished a police officer to accompany him, to which M. Perkowski agreed, and he asked Herr Siegmund where he could call for an officer; Herr Siegmund promised to find out and shortly afterwards telephoned to say that the police had no officer available. M. Perkowski thereupon informed Herr Siegmund that, in view of this, he must travel without this escort, and he travelled with two other Polish officials via Tczew to Kalthof. On arriving at Kalthof, M. Perkowski stopped in front of the house in which the Polish Customs Inspectors live, which he found had its window panes broken, window shutters torn off, and inflammatory slogans on this and other houses. In front of the house stood one of the country police [*Landjäger*] and a crowd of people. As M. Perkowski got out of the car and went to enter the house with the officials accompanying him, the policeman informed him that

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<sup>1</sup> The copy here printed formed enclosure 4 to a minute by Janson, dated May 22 (No. 836, not printed, 8049/E578604), with which he forwarded to the Foreign Ministry a copy of this Polish Note in German translation, together with that of a second Polish Note, referred to in footnote 2, a copy of Greiser's Note (see document No. 416, footnote 3) an account by Regierungsrat Siegmund and a Danzig Police report (not printed, 8049/E578605-12).

he had orders to allow no one to enter. Despite an explanation from M. Perkowski that he was the Acting Commissioner-General of the Republic of Poland in Danzig, the policeman maintained his refusal and said that he could not allow anyone to enter without an order of the District Chief. In reply to a question as to where the residents of the house were, he said he did not know and added that the house was empty and had been closed by the police. M. Perkowski therefore went with the officials accompanying him a few steps in the direction of the police station, from where he wished to telephone, but on the way changed his mind, got into the car and drove in the direction of the railway station. Jeers and whistling followed the departing officials. The car stopped on the way to the station, on an incline, at a point about 100 paces away from the building, which is bordered by a paling. From here M. Perkowski and the officials with him went to the railway station and left the chauffeur behind with the car. After a quarter of an hour they heard a number of shots, whereupon the chauffeur came running and out of breath, and said he had been attacked, and in self-defence he had fired two warning shots at an assailant, who fell.

According to the statements of the chauffeur, Zygmunt Morawski, the attack took place as follows: About five minutes after M. Perkowski and the officers with him had left the car, there came from the direction of Marienburg a large Mercedes car, which, as the chauffeur noted, bore the initials DZ, and stopped in the street, about 15 metres from the car in which M. Perkowski came. Out of this car got a number of persons in civilian clothes, but wearing jackboots. Two or three of these persons separated themselves from the others, and advanced rapidly towards the chauffeur, egging each other on to strike him. When the chauffeur saw this he started to retreat in the direction of the station building, and then ran away. When he saw one of the assailants draw a pistol and realized that he could not get away, he fired two shots into the air and two at the assailant, who fell.

Since, when the chauffeur arrived in the station building, it was expected that at any moment there would be an attack, the gentlemen in the station, whose car was in the hands of the assailants, rang up on the railway telephone to Tczew, for a locomotive or inspection trolley to be sent, and when a locomotive arrived, they left. Up to the time of their departure from the station no one from the police appeared.

In bringing this to your knowledge, Mr. President of the Senate, I must recall that recently I have repeatedly and emphatically drawn the attention of the Senate to the lack of security for the Polish part of the population in the territory of the Free City of Danzig, which has become especially and glaringly noticeable in the area of the Grosses Werder district, where for a long time intensive propaganda, without the least restraint on the means used, has continuously been conducted against Polish Customs Inspectors. In spite of these representations

today it has come to an open attack on the house where the Polish Customs Inspectors live, and which has been demolished, the police being neither able nor willing to prevent this. Matters have gone so far, that even the motor car of the Acting Commissioner General of the Republic of Poland, about whose visit to Kalthof the Senate of the Free City were notified, was attacked.

I have reported the attacks of yesterday to the Government of the Republic of Poland which I have the honour to represent in the territory of the Free City of Danzig.

Accept, Mr. President of the Senate, the expression of my high esteem.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In a second Note of even date (not printed, 8049/E578622-24) Chodacki also demanded, *inter alia*, compensation for damages and guarantees for the future security of Polish officials in Danzig. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 575, 577 and 579, and the *French Yellow Book*, No. 129.

## No. 419

2943/570103

### *The Minister in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 45 of May 22

STOCKHOLM, May 22, 1939—1:40 p.m.

Received May 22—3:00 p.m.

Pol. VI 1312.

With reference to my despatch No. A 728 of May 3.<sup>1</sup>

As the King of Sweden told me yesterday in the course of conversation, rather serious difficulties have arisen in Geneva over the Aaland question through Soviet Russia. The Cabinet Secretary of the Foreign Ministry [*sic*]<sup>2</sup> described this to me as a fresh political change in the Russian attitude. Molotov, in contrast to his attitude of a week ago, had now raised the most serious objections with the Finnish Minister in Moscow over the Aaland settlement.<sup>3</sup> Apparently Russia regarded the proposed fortification of the Islands as directed against herself. In the next few days extensive negotiations would also take place between Sandler and Maisky in Geneva. The King of Sweden and the Cabinet Secretary clearly expressed indignation over the complete unreliability of Russia.<sup>4</sup>

WIED

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2943/570073); in this Wied reported that the Swedish Foreign Ministry were hoping for a favourable Soviet reply on the Aaland proposals.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably E. C. Boheman, the Secretary General, is meant.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 68 of May 22 (2943/570102) Blücher reported: "I learn from the Finnish Foreign Minister that Molotov has put detailed questions to the Finnish Minister in Moscow about the proposed fortifications for the Aaland Islands. The Finnish Government have refused to give information. The Foreign Minister expects that in view of this and of Finland's refusal to accede to the Russian desires about the islands in the Gulf of Finland, Maisky will move, in the Council of the League of Nations, to postpone the Aaland question until the autumn."

<sup>4</sup> The substance of this telegram was repeated to Helsinki on May 23, as telegram No. 85 (5457/E366657).

## No. 420

7799/E568129-41

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1029

Moscow, May 22, 1939.

Received May 24.

Pol. V 4666.

Subject: Potemkin's visit to Ankara, etc.

I enclose for your information a memorandum reporting statements made to the Italian Ambassador by Potemkin, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, regarding his visits to Ankara, Bucharest, Sofia and Warsaw.

SCHULENBURG

[Enclosure]

A 1029

Moscow, May 22, 1939.

## MEMORANDUM

The Italian Ambassador, Rosso, had a conversation with the Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Potemkin, after the latter's return from his journey to Ankara, Sofia, Bucharest and Warsaw, and told me the following about it:

Potemkin, whose vanity and self-confidence have obviously received a new filip from his journey, had expressed himself as generally satisfied. The motive for the visits had been provided by the Anglo-Turkish negotiations; they had made consultation between Ankara and Moscow necessary to safeguard Soviet interests in the Straits. Potemkin had stated that he had, at the express wish of the Turkish Government, gone to Ankara to hold discussions there with the Government on the British proposal for a pact. His original intention had been to make only a brief stay in Ankara, but as the discussions had been extremely interesting, he had stayed five days. After a thorough study of the British proposals, he and the Turkish Government had agreed that it would be advisable to accept them.

In Ankara, Bucharest and Sofia Potemkin had interested himself in the question of Bulgaria's accession to the Balkan Pact. Further the possibility of the familiar plan for a Black Sea Pact had been discussed superficially.

Potemkin seemed to have been particularly favourably impressed by his conversation with Beck in Warsaw. Ambassador Rosso said he had asked Potemkin if he had not questioned Beck on the reasons for his statements about certain plans directed against the Ukraine. Thereupon Potemkin had made a gesture, part irritation, part brushing aside and said: "Ça, ce n'est pas sérieux."

VON TIPPESKIRCH

## No. 421

F13/384-85

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, May 22, 1939.

Yesterday evening the Führer, in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister, received the Lithuanian Foreign Minister who was accompanied by the Lithuanian Minister here. Following upon this the Reich Foreign Minister had a further and final conversation with M. Urbšys and M. Skirpa, in which he spoke as follows:

Urbšys had seen how friendly were the feelings entertained by the Führer for Lithuania. Lithuania could be sure that German policy would be a policy of friendship. Lithuania could, as the Führer had already stated, count upon Germany, should this be necessary in the future. There were no longer any open questions whatsoever, particularly now that German-Lithuanian economic relations also had been settled to the complete satisfaction of Lithuania by the new treaty arrangements.<sup>1</sup> Whether in the future we should go a step further economically or politically was not a pressing problem at the moment and could be reserved for possible consideration later. Friendly relations as established in principle in the Treaty of March 22, 1939,<sup>2</sup> naturally rested for us on the presumption that Lithuania would not enter into any commitments directed against German interests. In view of the present situation, we must here particularly include any political *rapprochement* or commitment to Poland. In reply to the Reich Foreign Minister's question on the basic principles of Lithuanian policy, Minister Urbšys emphasized that the first principle of Lithuanian policy was that of the strictest neutrality. No commitment of any kind directed against the interests of Germany would in any circumstances be considered. Nor did Lithuania contemplate assuming any such commitment in the future. With Poland, in particular, there existed no political agreements of any kind. The only contractual agreements concerned economic questions and questions of postal and railway communications.

The discussion, which was conducted in a particularly cordial and friendly tone, ended with the Reich Foreign Minister concluding that complete political agreement existed on all questions touched upon.

SCHNURRE

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 445.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 405, footnote 2.

## No. 422

1605/385559-62

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII*

BERLIN, May 22, 1939.

Pol. VII 822.

To the Foreign Minister through the State Secretary and the Under State Secretary.

More than a year ago the Foreign Affairs Office [of the NSDAP] suggested establishing diplomatic relations with King Ibn Saud and granting him a credit. Contacts, at first of a personal nature only, existed with the King's physician, and later his agent Khalid Al Hud appeared with instructions on economic matters.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Ministry did not follow up these suggestions at the time because:

1. King Ibn Saud had yielded completely to British tutelage;
2. he was remaining aloof from Pan-Arab aspirations and above all from the movement in Palestine;
3. it was feared that Germany was merely to be played off against Britain, and on occasion against Italy too.

In September last, owing to the need to provide our Minister in Bagdad with a possible place of safety in a neutral country, we decided to establish contact with Ibn Saud and also to use his Deputy Foreign Minister, who had expressly offered his services for this, to support the Arab cause in Palestine.<sup>2</sup> However, as it very soon became apparent that the Saudi Vice Foreign Minister, Fuad Hamza, was cultivating contacts with the opposite side and had also not passed on the sums entrusted to him, no action was taken on the renewed proposals for a credit made to us by the Foreign Affairs Office.

In the meantime Minister Grobba has presented his credentials to Ibn Saud and has had detailed confidential talks with him. The King has in no way denied his dependence on Britain, but has urgently requested us to make him gradually independent of Britain economically and militarily. Minister Grobba does not doubt but that these statements are sincere. Personally he was greatly impressed by the King, as is everyone who comes in contact with him.<sup>3</sup>

For this cooperation, which is to be kept secret at first, the King has selected two agents from his side to deal exclusively with the question

<sup>1</sup> See vol. v of this Series, chapter VIII, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note against this sentence: "Yes. R[jibbentrop]." In a minute of May 30 (not printed, 8200/E583076) Sonnleithner noted that the Foreign Minister agreed to Hentig's proposals.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313.

and has requested that in the Foreign Ministry, with which alone he wishes to deal, the negotiations should only be conducted through Minister Grobba and the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry. He has expressly asked that the Vice Foreign Minister, Fuad Hamza, should not be brought into the discussions, as the latter's attitude is obviously known to him. In return for assistance from Germany, which is envisaged in the first instance as the delivery of 8,000 rifles and a munitions factory on favourable terms, he offers not only his neutrality, and possibly even an active alliance, but also, from the date of an agreement on this, his full support for all German undertakings in his Kingdom and preferential participation by Germans in the organization of the State and the exploitation of its economic resources.

As recent months have shown that:

1. Egypt has thrown herself completely into the arms of Britain,
2. resistance in Palestine is visibly weakening,
3. Syria is not in a position to pursue an independent policy, whilst Irak has openly ranged herself with Britain,
4. a threat to the flank of the British overland route from Turkey has disappeared,
5. a regular income has accrued to King Ibn Saud during the past year from the oil resources on the coast of the Persian Gulf, and
6. in view of the growing mistrust which Italy is encountering in the Arab world (viz. sending back of the Italian aviation commission by Ibn Saud), according to what the Italian Minister in Jedda, Silitti, says, our cooperation would be extremely welcome to him.

Political Division VII, in agreement with the Reich Ministry of War, proposes:

(1) that the Royal Counsellor, Khalid Al Hud, should be received by the Reich Foreign Minister and given the opportunity (2) to hand the Führer a letter from King Ibn Saud, and (3) that Ibn Saud's desire for economic cooperation should be acceded to.<sup>4</sup>

HENTIG

<sup>4</sup> The figures in brackets in this paragraph have been inserted in pencil in the original, with a marginal note: "With reference to (3) prior consultation with the Italian Government is needed. W[oermann] 25 [May]." In telegram No. 284 of June 10 (not printed, 1605/385569-70) Woermann instructed the Embassy in Rome to sound the Italian Government.



## No. 423

2058/447033-34

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department*THE POSITION OF THE GERMAN-ITALIAN ECONOMIC NEGOTIATIONS  
AT PRESENT BEING CONDUCTED IN BERLIN<sup>1</sup>

The actual purpose of the negotiations, which began in Berlin a week ago, with an Italian Delegation led by the Director-General in the Italian Foreign Ministry, Ambassador Giannini, is the settlement of questions on Italo-German trade arising from the establishment of the Reich Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

Nevertheless the most important point in the negotiations is the situation created by the drop in Italian exports to Germany [*sic*]<sup>2</sup> which has come about during the last few months.

Germany already owes Italy 75 million Reichsmark.<sup>3</sup> The drop is primarily due to the fact that the German deliveries of coal, iron, steel and machinery provided for in the last agreement with Italy on February 13, 1939,<sup>4</sup> have not been anything like maintained owing to the heavy strain on German production.

If Count Ciano should bring these questions up, he might be told that the German Government are striving by all means to supply Italy from Germany, as far as is humanly possible, with the raw materials and machinery, important for her military and industrial rearmament. We hope that the two delegations will reach satisfactory agreements on this matter during the next few days.<sup>5</sup>

In the coal question a certain amount of progress can be noted in so far as that the Reich Ministry of Economics stated finally and definitely yesterday that they were prepared to make arrangements for at least 8.5 million tons to be delivered in 1939, although not the 9.2 million

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is undated, but see also document No. 360 which forecasts the beginning of the conversations on May 15, thus dating this document roughly May 22.

<sup>2</sup> This should presumably read, "German exports to Italy"; see footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 260 to Rome of May 25 (not printed, 5569/E398239) Clodius informed Milch that the Italians were prepared to have part of the clearing balance owing to them covered by the purchase of arms in Germany to the value of RM 40 million. Milch was requested to discuss this with General Pariani and was informed that it would hardly be possible for Germany to cover her debt to Italy except by large scale arms deliveries, and that otherwise she would have to face a reduction in Italian deliveries of important raw materials. See also Ministero degli Affari Esteri, Commissioni per la Pubblicazione dei Documenti Diplomatici, *I Documenti Diplomatici Italiani*, Ottava Serie, 1935-1939 (hereinafter cited as *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series) (La Libreria dello Stato, Rome, *in progress*), vol. XII, Nos. 28 and 31.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 451.

<sup>5</sup> On May 27 a confidential protocol in parallel German and Italian texts was signed in Berlin, regulating these matters (not printed, 8056/E579024-57). A number of other agreements relating to general questions of German-Italian economic relations were signed in Berlin on May 25 (not printed, 8056/E579003-23) and on May 27 (not printed, 8056/E579058-136).

tons provided for in the treaty of February. There is, however, no agreement yet on the allocation amongst the separate grades. In this connection political pressure by the Foreign Ministry on the Reich Ministry of Economics will perhaps still be necessary.

CLODIUS

No. 424

103/111346-47; 353-55

*Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

A 1023

Moscow, May 22, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: I have the honour to transmit to you as an enclosure a copy of the memorandum which gives the gist and course of my interview with M. Molotov on May 20.<sup>1</sup> I have also sent the memorandum as a despatch.<sup>2</sup>

The Reich [Foreign] Minister directed me to maintain extreme caution in my conference with Molotov.<sup>3</sup> As a result I contented myself with saying as little as possible, the more so as the attitude of M. Molotov seems to me quite suspicious. It cannot be understood otherwise than that the resumption of our economic negotiations does not satisfy him as a political gesture and that he obviously wants to obtain from us more extensive proposals of a political nature. We must, I think, be extremely cautious in this field as long as it is not certain that any possible proposals from our side will not be used by the Kremlin only to exert pressure on Britain and France. On the other hand, if we want to accomplish something here it may well be unavoidable that we sooner or later take some action.

It is extraordinarily difficult here to learn anything at all about the course of the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations. My British colleague<sup>4</sup> who apparently is the only one who is active in that connection here (he was announced to M. Potemkin, while I happened to be with the latter) preserves a stony silence. Neutral diplomats have not been able to learn anything either.

My French colleague<sup>5</sup> has been away for some time. The Counsellor of the Embassy and Chargé d'Affaires<sup>6</sup> a few days ago asked us for a *laissez passer* so that it seems that he is also going to leave Moscow. If the reports are correct that France will now take over the negotia-

<sup>1</sup> For Schulenburg's preliminary report on this interview, see document No. 414, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> Under cover of despatch No. A 1023 of May 22 (not printed, 695/260425).

<sup>3</sup> No record of such instructions has been found. They were presumably given during Schulenburg's visit to Munich; see document No. 325, footnote 4.

<sup>4</sup> Sir William Seeds.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Emile Naggiar.

<sup>6</sup> Jean Payart.

tions in the matter of the Anglo-French-Soviet "Alliance", these negotiations may well take place not here but in Paris.

My Italian colleague is of the opinion that the Soviet Union will surrender her freedom to negotiate only if Britain and France give her a full treaty of alliance.

It is repeatedly stated here—I do not know whether it is correct—that one of the principal reasons for the hesitation of Britain in accepting the Soviet proposals for a military alliance is concern for Japan. London is said to be afraid of driving the Japanese into our arms by undertaking to defend all Soviet frontiers. If Japan should come into our arms voluntarily these misgivings may well disappear for Britain.

With best greetings and

Heil Hitler,

I am, dear Herr von Weizsäcker,

Yours etc.,

SCHULENBURG

[Enclosure]

Zu A/1023

Moscow, May 20, 1939.

MEMORANDUM

This afternoon at 4:00 p.m. I was received by the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and Commissar for Foreign Affairs, M. Molotov. The interview took place in the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. It lasted over an hour and was carried on in a friendly fashion. M. Molotov who speaks only Russian had requested that no translator be brought along since he himself would provide an excellent interpreter. This interpreter, a rather young man, translated very correctly but slowly from French; that explains in part the long duration of the conference.

I opened the conversation by saying to M. Molotov that the last proposals of M. Mikoyan<sup>7</sup> in our economic negotiations had presented us with several difficulties which could not be immediately removed. We now believed we had found a way to come to an understanding and we intended in the very near future to send Geheimrat Dr. Schnurre to Moscow to discuss with M. Mikoyan whether an agreement could be reached on the basis of our proposals. I asked whether M. Mikoyan was prepared to confer with Herr Schnurre.

M. Molotov replied that the course of our last economic negotiations had given the Soviet Government the impression that we had not been at all in earnest in the matter and we had only toyed with the negotiations for political reasons. At first it had been stated that a German delegation was coming for economic negotiations to Moscow (I interposed that this report did not emanate from us but from the Polish

<sup>7</sup> Anastas Mikoyan, People's Commissar for Foreign Trade. For his proposals see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 491.

and French press), and later it was said that Herr Schnurre was coming alone.<sup>8</sup> Herr Schnurre had not come, but Herr Hilger and I had conducted the negotiations and then these negotiations also had faded out. Consequently the Soviet Government could only agree to a resumption of the negotiation if the necessary "political basis" for them were to be constructed.

I told M. Molotov that we had never regarded the economic negotiations as a game but that we had always taken them most seriously. We always had had, and still had, the sincerest intention to come to an agreement and Berlin was of the opinion, if I understood it correctly, that a successful conclusion of the economic negotiations would also help the political atmosphere. It had been technical reasons only that had been responsible for Herr Schnurre's absence and for the delay of the negotiations. The present economic conditions in Germany made it very difficult to fulfil the wishes of M. Mikoyan. I asked M. Molotov what he meant by the construction of a political basis. I had the impression that the German-Soviet atmosphere had been improving for some considerable time and I was surprised that economic negotiations should now be impossible while previously such negotiations had repeatedly taken place under more unfavourable conditions and had been brought to a conclusion. M. Molotov then declared that the way in which a better political basis could be constructed was something that both Governments would have to think about. All my determined efforts to bring M. Molotov to make his wishes definite and more concrete were in vain. M. Molotov had obviously determined to say just so much and not a word more. He is known for this somewhat stubborn manner. I thereupon concluded the conversation and stated that I would inform my Government. M. Molotov then bade me farewell in a very friendly fashion.

Immediately after the conclusion of my visit to M. Molotov, I visited M. Potemkin. I related to him the course of my conversation with the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and I added that I had unfortunately not been able to find out from the conversation what M. Molotov actually wanted. He certainly must have had something in mind. I asked M. Potemkin to find out whether he could not possibly let me know what direction M. Molotov's line of thought was taking. I gave the impression that I did not know at all what I should suggest to my Government. Nothing would be changed in the main lines of German policy. Thus, in my opinion, we would persevere in our East Asia policy. I could however add that this policy was in no way directed against the Soviet Union.

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

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<sup>8</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 485 and 486.

## No. 425

2898/56745-48

*The Japanese Ambassador to the Reich Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 22, 1939.

Pol. VIII 818.

HERE REICHSMINISTER: I have the honour to inform Your Excellency herewith that I have been directed by the Japanese Government to transmit to the German Government the text of the following telegram which has just arrived from Tokyo.

"The Japanese Government are firmly convinced that the conclusion of the Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy, the two nations with whom Japan is on terms of close friendship, will continue to deepen the close relations existing between the two countries, will provide firm support for the extremely insecure European situation and thus make an exceedingly valuable contribution towards preserving and strengthening world peace. It is in this spirit that the Japanese Government tender their most sincere congratulations on the occasion of this event of importance to world history."<sup>1</sup>

I therefore venture to request Your Excellency to acquaint the German Government with the above telegram and at the same time I also avail myself of this opportunity to assure you once more of my highest consideration.

OSHIMA

<sup>1</sup> Handwritten marginal note dated May 26: "Telephoned through to Sonnenburg". A similar telegram was sent to Mussolini; see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 27.

## No. 426

2871/568592-603

*Pact of Friendship and Alliance between Germany and Italy*<sup>1</sup>

THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR

AND

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF ITALY AND ALBANIA,  
EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA

deem that the time has come to strengthen the close relationship of friendship and homogeneity, existing between National Socialist Germany and Fascist Italy, by a solemn Pact.

<sup>1</sup> The text of this Pact, but without the secret additional Protocol, was published at the time of signature and appears in the *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 825-833. This Pact, as signed and deposited in the German Foreign Ministry archives, has the German and Italian texts printed on alternate pages. This translation has been made from the German text.

Now that a safe bridge for mutual aid and assistance has been established by the common frontier between Germany and Italy fixed for all time, both Governments reaffirm the policy, the principles and objectives of which have already been agreed upon by them, and which has proved successful, both for promoting the interests of the two countries and also for safeguarding peace in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

Firmly united by the inner affinity between their ideologies and the comprehensive solidarity of their interests, the German and Italian nations are resolved in future also to act side by side and with united forces to secure their living space<sup>2</sup> and to maintain peace.

Following this path, marked out for them by history, Germany and Italy intend, in the midst of a world of unrest and disintegration, to serve the task of safeguarding the foundations of European civilization.

In order to lay down these principles in a pact there have been appointed plenipotentiaries:

by the German Reich Chancellor:

the Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop;

by His Majesty the King of Italy and Albania, Emperor of Ethiopia:

the Minister for Foreign Affairs,  
Count Galeazzo Ciano di Cortellazzo;

who having exchanged their full powers, found to be in good and due form, have agreed on the following terms.

#### Article I

The High Contracting Parties will remain in continuous contact with each other in order to reach an understanding on all questions affecting their common interests or the general European situation.

#### Article II

Should the common interests of the High Contracting Parties be endangered by international events of any kind whatsoever, they will immediately enter into consultations on the measures to be taken for the protection of these interests.

Should the security or other vital interests of one of the High Contracting Parties be threatened from without, the other High Contracting Party will afford the threatened Party full political and diplomatic support in order to remove this threat.

#### Article III

If, contrary to the wishes and hopes of the High Contracting Parties, it should happen that one of them became involved in warlike complications with another Power or Powers, the other High Contracting

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<sup>2</sup> For the change of wording here from the draft of May 12, see document No. 371, footnote 1.

Party would immediately come to its assistance as an ally and support it with all its military forces on land, at sea and in the air.

#### Article IV

In order to ensure in specific cases the speedy execution of the obligations of alliance undertaken under Article III, the Governments of the two High Contracting Parties will further intensify their collaboration in the military field, and in the field of war economy.

In the same way the two Governments will remain in continuous consultation also on other measures necessary for the practical execution of the provisions of this Pact.

For the purposes indicated in paragraphs 1 and 2 above, the two Governments will set up commissions which will be under the direction of the two Foreign Ministers.

#### Article V

The High Contracting Parties undertake even now that, in the event of war waged jointly, they will conclude an armistice and peace only in full agreement with each other.

#### Article VI

The two High Contracting Parties are aware of the significance that attaches to their common relations with Powers friendly to them. They are resolved to maintain these relations in the future also and together to shape them in accordance with the common interests which form the bonds between them and these Powers.

#### Article VII

This Pact shall enter into force immediately upon signature. The two High Contracting Parties are agreed in laying down that its first term of validity shall be for ten years. In good time before the expiry of this period, they will reach agreement on the extension of the validity of the Pact.<sup>2</sup>

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries have signed this Pact and affixed thereto their seals.

Done in duplicate in the German and the Italian languages, both texts being equally authoritative.

Berlin, May 22, 1939, in the XVIIth year of the Fascist Era.

JOACHIM V. RIBBENTROP

GALEAZZO CIANO<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Ciano paid an official visit to Berlin, May 21-22, to sign the Pact.

#### SECRET ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE PACT OF FRIENDSHIP AND ALLIANCE BETWEEN GERMANY AND ITALY<sup>4</sup>

At the time of signature of the Pact of Friendship and Alliance, both Parties have reached agreement on the following points:

<sup>4</sup> The signed original of this Secret Protocol in the German Foreign Ministry archives is, like the Pact, printed with the German and Italian texts on alternate pages. It has not been bound with the rest of the Pact, but is inserted loose in the volume.

1. The two Foreign Ministers will reach agreement as quickly as possible on the organization, headquarters and working methods of the commissions for military questions and questions of war economy to be set up under their direction as provided for in Article IV<sup>5</sup> of the Pact.

2. In execution of Article IV, paragraph 2, of the Pact the two Foreign Ministers will as quickly as possible take all necessary steps to ensure continuous collaboration in the fields of the press, information and propaganda in accordance with the spirit and aims of the Pact.

For this purpose each of the two Foreign Ministers will assign to his country's Embassy, in the capital of the other, one or more specially qualified experts who, in direct collaboration with the Foreign Ministry there, will continually consult on the steps which are suitable for promoting the policy of the Axis and counteracting the policy of opposing Powers in the fields of the press, information and propaganda.

Berlin, May 22, 1939—in the XVIIth year of the Fascist Era.

JOACHIM V. RIBBENTROP

GALEAZZO CIANO

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<sup>5</sup> The draft of May 12 (see document No. 371, footnote 1) has "Paragraph 1" inserted here.

## No. 427

174/135950

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, May 23, 1939—12:20 p.m.

SECRET

Received May 23—7:30 a.m.

No. 217 of May 23

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 213 of May 20.<sup>1</sup>

As I do not know whether the wording of the Cabinet decision of May 20 allows the underlying Japanese point of view to be clearly seen, I give herewith to supplement the (group mutilated) here, an account, differing from the Army statement, of the genesis of this decision, which account I received from the leading Foreign Ministry officials mentioned in my telegrams Nos. 187 and 192.<sup>2</sup> According to this account the Minister President, determined to secure the tripartite pact, found a formula which provided the present Government with the only possibility of overcoming the fundamental cleavage within the Cabinet, often reported on. Hereby Japan allegedly wished to make entry into war, not indeed against the Soviet Union, but against

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 410.

<sup>2</sup> Documents Nos. 339 and 344.



Britain and France, dependent on prevailing circumstances. The Army agreed so as to avoid the resignation of the Cabinet, which would be most unwelcome to the Army at present. My confidant personally reckons with a protracted delay in concluding the pact, should our Government not agree to the formula.

OTT

## No. 428

2767/535884

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 241 of May 23

BUCHAREST, May 23, 1939—8:40 p.m.

Received May 23—11:15 p.m.

Pol. II 1796.

1) Gafencu gave me the following information about his conversation with [Cincar-] Marković at Turnu Severin:<sup>1</sup>

The two Foreign Ministers were agreed on the necessity for maintaining the Balkan Pact. This aim could only be achieved by complete independence in the great competition by the nations. In particular, there should be no hostile opposition to the Axis Powers.

It must therefore be demanded that the Anglo-Turkish agreement be limited exclusively to the Mediterranean and by no means extended to the Balkans. Rumania had already been promised that the final text of the agreement would contain no conditions affecting the Balkans. Marković, however, had condemned the Declaration already made.<sup>2</sup> Gafencu had had to agree with him. But he had not considered the public declaration proposed by Marković to be in the interests of maintaining the Balkan Pact. But now that the Declaration<sup>2</sup> had been made, he had instructed his Ambassador in Ankara<sup>3</sup> to insist that at least the promise concerning the final text be kept in full.

2) Gafencu has sent the State Secretary, Cretzianu, to Geneva<sup>4</sup> to make it clear to Britain and France that Rumania intends to keep her full independence, and does not desire to be brought into a Russian security system by any kind of formula.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> On May 21. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 618. In telegram No. 161 of May 24 from Belgrade (not printed, 3039/600558) Heeren reported Cincar-Marković as having said that he and Gafencu had agreed that the question of safeguarding peace in the Balkans was one which concerned the Balkans alone, and any interference by the Great Powers should be rejected.

<sup>2</sup> The Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12. See Editors' Note on p. 483. For Yugoslav reactions to this Declaration see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 440, 526 and 555.

<sup>3</sup> Vasile Stoica.

<sup>4</sup> The Council of the League of Nations was in session at Geneva, May 22-27.

## No. 429

1818/415449-55

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

P. 24

WARSAW, May 23, 1939.

Received May 24.

Pol. V 4659.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Polish attempts to resume talks.

As was to be foreseen, the Poles are feeling less and less at ease in their new dependence on Great Britain's favour. Indications that people are becoming somewhat more thoughtful I see, above all, in the unmistakable efforts to secure direct talks with Germany or mediation by third Powers. In this connection the following seems to me worth reporting:

M. Beck, as I am reliably informed, has, through Count Lubienski, his *Chef de Cabinet*, sounded the Japanese Ambassador Sakoh here—albeit cautiously—about possible Japanese mediation. Mr. Sakoh, who, after consultation with his Berlin colleague, reached the conclusion that mediation was inopportune at the present juncture, informed Lubienski to that effect.<sup>2</sup> He added that he had no doubt that, should the Polish Government so desire, the Japanese Government would be prepared to make their good offices available. However, it seemed to him personally more advisable for Poland to approach the Italian Government on possible mediation. I hear that Ambassador Sakoh made this suggestion because he had learned from a telegram from the Japanese Ambassador in Rome on a conversation between Count Ciano and Wieniawa, the Polish Ambassador,<sup>3</sup> that Italian mediation had already been mentioned there. I enclose a short memorandum on details of this conversation which I assume is already known to the Foreign Ministry through Count Ciano.

As I hear from different sides, the Poles would actually prefer to enter into direct conversations with us again, as opposed to mediation by third States. Obviously as a result of this desire, the Under State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, Arciszewski, recently expressed the wish to a friendly diplomat to meet me socially. Although I pointed out that I could not myself foresee any results from such a conversation at present, this meeting—it was an invitation to luncheon—took place, and indeed with the express approval of Foreign Minister Beck. During

<sup>1</sup> This report is stamped: "Submitted to the Führer", and is initialled in the margin by Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 394.

<sup>3</sup> See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of May 15, 1939.

the lengthy conversation that resulted, it appeared as though the Under State Secretary was first and foremost concerned to exonerate M. Beck personally in our eyes. M. Beck, he said, had carried out this whole policy with inner misgivings, under pressure from military quarters and from public opinion. The decisive conversation with Ambassador Lipski had, because it had taken place a week after the entry into Czecho-Slovakia and on the same day as the occupation of Memel,<sup>4</sup> caused such consternation in Warsaw that Beck had no longer been in a position to reject the British offer. Then, in view of local feeling which made discussion of the matter in public appear to him inopportune, he repeatedly kept postponing it until he was finally forced by the Führer's speech<sup>5</sup> to make a reply. His answer in the *Sejm*,<sup>6</sup> when he had perforce to represent a policy not his own, and the enthusiasm which his speech had aroused in the public here, had only filled M. Beck with bitterness. M. Arciszewski then dramatically described how, the next day, M. Beck, in a fit of rage, had thrown a whole sheaf of congratulatory telegrams into a corner. Even today M. Beck was still at heart an adherent of the old policy. However, he did not understand why it was precisely the German population of Danzig that must unconditionally return to the Reich, while Germany was obviously prepared to renounce the South Tyrol and Alsace. On the other hand it did seem to him absurd that it should be precisely the two comparatively so poor countries Germany and Poland that should fight each other, since, in the end, this could only be to the advantage of the rich countries. How much M. Beck still hoped for an understanding with Germany had also been shown in the negotiations on assistance from Soviet Russia, in which Poland—as has indeed also been confirmed to me from elsewhere<sup>7</sup>—has let herself be guided, in the main, by apprehension of the repercussions on Germany. M. Arciszewski gave it as his opinion too that some compromise must surely be found which would avoid conveying an impression of capitulation.

I confined myself, during this conversation, to contrasting the generous concepts of the Führer with the shortsighted Polish view. Further, I pointed out that Beck's pronouncements had in no way contributed towards easing the situation, and that, at the present juncture, it did not strike me as opportune, after our generous proposal had been rejected, to conduct further negotiations. For what there was to say had been included in the Führer's speech.

I should like to add that, in the course of the conversation, M. Arciszewski referred to Reichsminister Dr. Goebbels' article in the

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<sup>4</sup> The reference is presumably to the conversation on Mar. 21, see document No. 61. The occupation of Memel took place on Mar. 23.

<sup>5</sup> On Apr. 28. See Editors' Note on p. 355.

<sup>6</sup> On May 5. See the *Polish White Book*, No. 77.

<sup>7</sup> See also document No. 389.

*Völkischer Beobachter*,<sup>8</sup> which had stated the principle that the press might say what diplomats could not say at the time. This principle was also adopted in the article in reply in the *Gazeta Polska*,<sup>9</sup> and it was hoped that the calm answer to Minister Goebbels' statements, which here, too, were felt to be moderate, would be suitably appreciated in Berlin.

How far the Polish attitude, as described above, is due to British influence is hard to assess. The British Ambassador here is in constant touch with M. Beck and I have reliable information that the numerous incidents in the minority area here and in Danzig are also discussed between them. The Ambassador made no secret of his anxiety to me either. I hear that he is said to be turning over the idea of bringing about a temporary improvement of the atmosphere by a joint German-Polish declaration. It is also interesting to note how much fluctuations in Anglo-Soviet negotiations can be felt here at the moment, both in the attitude of Polish Government circles as well as among the British and French here.

MOLTKE

<sup>8</sup> This article, entitled "Bayonets as Signposts [*Bayonette als Wegweiser*]" appeared on May 13.

<sup>9</sup> Moltke forwarded a German translation of the article with his report of May 20 (not printed, 1818/415439-48) attributing authorship to the Polish Foreign Ministry.

[Enclosure]

#### MEMORANDUM

According to what an informant reports, the Japanese Ambassador here received a telegram from the Japanese Ambassador in Rome about a conversation which took place on May 15 or 16 between the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, and the Polish Ambassador, Wieniawa. According to this, the Polish Ambassador, Wieniawa, called on the Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, to tell him that in view of the way the political situation had developed recently he was considering tendering his resignation. Today, however, he wanted to speak as one soldier to another. In the conversation, which Count Ciano conducted with great frankness, he is reported as having spoken in these terms:

1) The Anglo-Polish guarantee agreement was the greatest piece of stupidity in Polish foreign policy. There had been no need for a guarantee by Britain of Poland's independence, because Germany had always been ready for direct agreement with Poland.

2) Anglo-French support was of no more value than throwing a pebble at a raging lion.

3) Protected by the western fortifications, Germany could completely annihilate Poland.

4) In spite of the good relations which Italy had so long had with Poland, in a future war Poland would find Italy at Germany's side.

5) Italy was prepared, however, to mediate between Poland and Germany, should the Polish Government request this.

## No. 430

1585/383117-19

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2071

PARIS, May 23, 1939.

Pol. II 1788.

Subject: Conversation between an informant and Flandin.

I have the honour to enclose a memorandum by a reliable informant on a conversation which he had on May 22 with the former Minister President, Flandin. The remarks of M. Flandin, who still clings to the idea of an understanding with Germany and who is very reserved with regard to Great Britain, appear to me at the present moment interesting and characteristic of what is felt about the present situation among objectively-minded members of Parliament. In particular I would like to draw attention to Flandin's remarks on the dangerous effect of the new Anglo-French agreements with, and guarantees to, Poland.

H. WELCZECK

[Enclosure]

zu A 2071

## CONVERSATION WITH PIERRE-ETIENNE FLANDIN ON MAY 22, 1939

M. Flandin spent the weekend in his constituency and used the time to study the mood of the rural population. He told me that he considered the present atmosphere as very serious, for, in contrast to the September crisis, public opinion in the provinces showed a visible readiness for war. Even to rhetorical questions such as: "You surely wouldn't want to fight on account of Danzig?" the former Minister President received from his constituents the answer: "Well, we must put an end to Germany's actions some time!" Flandin added that those of his parliamentary colleagues to whom he had been able to speak during the last few days had made the same observations and had had similar experiences.

"I see a special danger in the fact that the Government, who feel obliged—and must feel obliged—to contemplate the possibility of a conflict with Germany, have by their general attitude contributed to create an atmosphere which allows them no withdrawal. It is my impression that, by every speech and statement of its members, the Daladier Cabinet is erecting walls behind itself which will admit of no turning back in the event of a deterioration of the international situation as a result of possible German intervention in Danzig. I consider M. Bonnet as the most conscious and the most steadfast pacifist in the Cabinet, but even his speeches—read for instance the speech which he

made in Arcachon<sup>1</sup>—reveal the presence of these walls. Daladier is one of those French politicians who sense the general atmosphere particularly well. His speeches reflect in a remarkable way the average feeling of our people. For two reasons the Government today cannot exert a pacifying influence on public opinion: 1. They are rightly convinced that any retarding measure will be interpreted as weakness on their part and that they would most certainly be swept out of office at once. 2. At this time of emergency they are acting on the firm belief that—even if it were possible—a relaxation of the energetic efforts resulting from the general fear of war might have the most serious repercussions on rearmament.”

Flandin then spoke of the danger in the field of foreign policy. He assured me again that he believed in Hitler's and Mussolini's desire for peace, and that fundamentally the peoples of the totalitarian States were striving for the same goal as those of the democracies. However, the atmosphere in France and Britain today was such that war might break out over an incident which, seen objectively, would appear insignificant. “We might indeed find ourselves involved in a war in four days or in a few weeks!” A particular deterioration of the international situation was caused by the fact that the Entente Powers had put Poland in a position which virtually invited Warsaw to carry out their political aims—relying on the support of her great allies. The following should be borne in mind: Poland had never before been in so strong and favourable a position as at the present moment. “Since the end of the war there has been a definite aversion to Poland in London and also in Government circles in Paris. Baldwin never made any secret of his dislike for Poland, to say nothing of the sentiments of Lloyd George. Even the pacifist Briand was never pro-Polish. For these reasons, Polish Government circles were never under any illusion about the finality of the Versailles settlement (Corridor, Danzig). There was always the feeling in Warsaw that sooner or later the efforts of the Entente Powers would bring about a revision of the Versailles Statute in Eastern Europe. This fear has now been suddenly swept away by the Anglo-French guarantee addressed to Poland, and the Poles have become the masters of the decision over war or peace! I am convinced that this fact harbours imminent danger! Europe is like a pile of dry wood. One spark is enough to set it alight.”

In conclusion M. Flandin spoke of the danger of the formation of a reformed and limited League of Nations with unlimited responsibilities. “Whereas in the League of Nations in its present form, Article 16 has never been effective, in the new limited League of Nations this Article

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<sup>1</sup> In a speech to the congress of the Union Nationale des Anciens Combattants at Arcachon, on May 21, Bonnet had reviewed the recent negotiations, disclaimed any desire by France to encircle any other country, but stressed her intention to resist the use of force.

will play the leading part. Until Locarno, indeed, even until 1935, a sort of League of Nations mysticism based on humanitarian ideas and sentiments existed in all political parties in France; the new League of Nations, on the other hand, will be based on purely material considerations and power politics."

## No. 431

F10/312

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RM 30

BERLIN, May 23, 1939.

1) Count Ciano during his stay in Berlin<sup>1</sup> raised the matter of Yugoslavia's foreign policy and stated that according to confidential reports available to the Italian Government, Yugoslavia's attitude was not so much above reproach as the Yugoslav Government sought to represent it abroad. Certain tendencies had come to the ears of the Italian Government which made it appear appropriate to speak in forthright terms to Prince Regent Paul and M. Cincar Marković during their coming visit to Berlin.<sup>2</sup> As a proof of the sincerity of her foreign policy, Yugoslavia would have to be asked to withdraw officially from the League of Nations or even to accede to the Anti-Comintern Pact.

2) Count Ciano stated that, beyond the official assurance that they had no territorial demands of any sort on Turkish territory<sup>3</sup> the Italian Government could not take any further steps to improve Turco-Italian relations.

It was agreed to continue to follow Turkish policy attentively but to refrain from making any quick decisions for the time being.

ERICH KORDT

<sup>1</sup> See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entries of May 21 and 22, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> The Prince Regent accompanied by Cincar-Marković paid a State visit to Berlin, June 1-5, 1939. See document No. 474.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 317.

## No. 432

2768/536220-23

*Senior Counsellor Grundherr to Minister Renthe-Fink*

By the next reliable delivery

BERLIN, May 20, 1939.

Sent May 23.

zu Pol. VI 1307.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR HERR VON RENTHE-FINK: Many thanks for your friendly letter of May 15.<sup>1</sup> I at once got into touch with Reichsminister Frank's

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2768/536217-18). In this letter Renthe-Fink announced that Jacobsen was planning to attend the *Tag des Deutschen Rechts* (Day of German Law) in Leipzig and also wished to meet the Reichsführer-SS. He strongly recommended that Jacobsen be treated as a specially honoured guest and be received by the Reichsführer-SS in person, since he was important to Germany, and might be a coming man in Denmark.

office and the Adjutant's Office of the Reichsführer-SS in connection with the visit to Germany of Chief of Police Jacobsen and asked both authorities to take further steps in the direction desired by you. The Reichsminister's office has informed me that all arrangements have been made to ensure that M. Jacobsen is received appropriately in Leipzig and has all due attention. As regards the visit to the Reichsführer-SS, who only arrives in Berlin this evening, nothing definite can yet be said. It is, however, believed that a personal reception can probably be arranged.

BERLIN, May 23, 1939.

Many thanks for your lines of May 19.<sup>2</sup> Please excuse me for not yet having given you any information about the conversation with Möller. In the turmoil of business I have not yet been able to write a memorandum about it. There were present at the meeting: Möller, Counsellor of Legation Lorenz of the Cultural Policy Department (Division A), Herr Meissner (Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle) and myself. As far as I recollect, there was also a younger man from the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. I had previously discussed the matter with the Cultural Policy Department, Herr von Weizsäcker and Herr Woermann. I began by explaining that the Führer desired tranquillity in relations with our neighbour States and for what reasons. In no circumstances must our relations with Denmark now be rendered difficult in the sphere of foreign policy. In the minorities' struggle, externals (processions, white stockings, shoulder-straps and such things) were unimportant; what mattered was to do everything to maintain our position materially, or, if possible, even to improve it. Phrases like "The March to Freedom" were misguided. The highest authorities had, for instance, only allowed Dr. Neumann<sup>3</sup> to employ this phrase a week before the entry of German troops into Memel.<sup>4</sup> Altogether this collaboration with Dr. Neumann had been ideal, because he had conformed with our strict instructions down to the smallest details. For the rest, the situation in North Schleswig was fundamentally different from that in Memel, because the question of the reintegration of North Schleswig was in no way acute, so that possibly a considerable passage of time must be reckoned with. That called for tactics of another kind. The Danes would await Möller's first speech in Parliament in great suspense.<sup>5</sup> It would not do for him to touch upon the frontier question

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2768/536219). In this letter Renthe-Fink asked for information about Möller's visit to Berlin and his conversations there. Jens Möller was a leader of the German minority in Denmark; see also vol. v of this Series, chapter iv.

<sup>3</sup> National Socialist Leader in the Memel Territory; see also vol. v of this Series, chapter iii, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> On Mar. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Renthe-Fink had reported on Möller's speech made on May 11 in despatch No. 201 B of May 19 (not printed, 2642/527003-04).



at all. If the Danes did so, as I did not think they would, there would always still be time to point out to them in a circumspect manner that they must surely themselves know best how the North Schleswig minority and the German people judged the way the frontier had come to be set up; it represented a present from the Versailles Powers to neutral Denmark, who was not prepared to negotiate directly with Germany. On the other hand, I gave Möller a free hand for his speech in the matter of his demands in the economic sphere (mortgages, land-credit policy, etc.). I urged him, but apparently in vain, to utter a few words of acknowledgment to the Danish Government for the conciliatory spirit sometimes shown in the cultural sphere. Herr Möller's main contention was that the *Volksgruppe* were nearly in despair, not knowing when they might return to Germany. Therefore, in order that the *Volksgruppe* might not disintegrate, he must be able to offer them something to keep them to the task. So he must be somewhat radical. I pointed out to Herr Möller that, if he came out too sharply in Parliament, he would only increase the difficulties of the practical work, in which he was always dependent on the cooperation of the Danes. I admitted that the situation was not altogether simple for him; in this matter it was precisely a question of showing his gifts of leadership. Herr Möller then urgently asked for financial support, that is, for the granting of foreign exchange. We explained to him that the Cultural Policy Department (Division A), the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and Political Division VI would of course do everything to provide as much foreign exchange as possible for the minority. He could count on our fullest support over this. Finally I also urged him to keep in close contact with you.

I am very anxious to see how the non-aggression pact will now develop. Sandler's influence has brought about a change in Erkkö who was originally in favour of it.<sup>6</sup> For the rest, it came out particularly well in the Norwegian press that the Norwegian Government would have replied to the enquiries of any other Power in just the same terms of rejection as it employed towards Germany, and that it was deplorable that the foreign press, in a spirit of incitement, should attribute to Norway an absolutely non-existent anti-German motive in her refusal of the German offer.

Zahle is, therefore, now in possession of the German-Estonian and German-Latvian Pacts and of the alterations we have accorded to the Estonians and Latvians, at their desire.<sup>7</sup> I have also sent you this material in its entirety.

Herr Frielitz<sup>8</sup> was with me yesterday. I hope he has not got within

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 358.

<sup>7</sup> See documents Nos. 316, 352, 359 and 390.

<sup>8</sup> K. Frielitz, Press Attaché at the German Legation in Copenhagen.

too close range of our dispute with the Propaganda Ministry, which at the moment is raging very briskly.<sup>9</sup>

So much for today,

Many regards and Heil Hitler!

Always yours sincerely,

VON GRUNDHERR

<sup>9</sup> From a memorandum by Altenburg of June 1, 1939 (not printed, 419/216248-49) it is apparent that the point at issue was the control of policy over foreign propaganda and broadcasting. See also document No. 707, footnote 2.

## No. 433

Nuremberg document 79-L  
Exhibit USA-27

### *Minutes of a Conference on May 23, 1939*

TOP SECRET

To be handled by officer only.

Place: The Führer's study, New Reich Chancellery.

Adjutant on Duty: Lt. Col. (General Staff) Schmudt.

Present: The Führer, Field Marshal Göring, Grand Admiral Raeder, Colonel General von Brauchitsch, Colonel General Keitel, Colonel General Milch, General (of Artillery) Halder, General Bodenschatz, Rear-Admiral Schniewind, Colonel (attached to the General Staff) Jeschonnek, Colonel (General Staff) Warlimont, Lieutenant Colonel (General Staff) Schmudt, Captain Engel (Army), Lieutenant Commander Albrecht, Captain von Below (Army).

Subject: *Briefing on the Situation and Political Objectives*<sup>1</sup>

The Führer gave as the purpose of the conference:

- (1) Review of the situation.
- (2) To set the Armed Forces the tasks arising from the situation.
- (3) Definition of the conclusions to be drawn from these tasks.
- (4) Ensuring that secrecy is maintained on all decisions and measures resulting from these conclusions. Secrecy is the prerequisite for success.

The gist of the Führer's statements is as follows.

Our present position must be viewed under two aspects.

(a) Actual development from 1933-1939.

(b) Germany's never-changing situation.

From 1933-1939 progress in all spheres. Our military situation improved enormously.

<sup>1</sup> From here on this document is in manuscript by Schmudt, the earlier part being in typescript. Stylistic and grammatical improvements have been made on the manuscript by another hand in some places, and in others by the author himself. The translation here printed includes these improvements, which, as they do not materially alter the sense, have not been indicated in footnotes. A list of these variants will be found in the *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. xxxvii, pp. 546-556.

Our situation *vis-à-vis* the surrounding world has remained the same.

Germany was outside the circle of the Great Powers. A balance of power had been established without Germany's participation.

This balance is being disturbed by Germany claiming her vital rights and her reappearance in the circle of the Great Powers. All claims are regarded as "breaking in".

The English are more afraid of economic dangers than of ordinary threats of force.

The ideological problems have been solved by the mass of 80,000,000 people. The economic problems must also be solved. To create the economic conditions necessary for this is a task no German can disregard. The solution of the problems demands courage. The principle must not prevail that one can accommodate oneself to the circumstances and thus shirk the solution of the problems. The circumstances must rather be adapted to suit the demands. This is not possible without "breaking in" to other countries or attacking other people's possessions.

Living space proportionate to the greatness of the State is fundamental to every Power. One can do without it for a time but sooner or later the problems will have to be solved by hook or by crook. The alternatives are rise or decline. In fifteen or twenty years' time the solution will be forced upon us. No German statesman can shirk the problem for longer.

At present we are in a state of national ebullience as are two other states: Italy and Japan.

The years behind us have been put to good use. All measures were consistently directed towards the goal.

After six years the present position is as follows:

The national political unification of the Germans has been achieved bar minor exceptions. Further successes can no longer be won without bloodshed.

The delineation of frontiers is of military importance.

The Pole is not a fresh enemy. Poland will always be on the side of our adversaries. In spite of treaties of friendship Poland has always been bent on exploiting every opportunity against us.

It is not Danzig that is at stake. For us it is a matter of expanding our living space in the East and making food supplies secure and also solving the problem of the Baltic States. Food supplies can only be obtained from thinly populated areas. Over and above fertility, the thorough German cultivation will tremendously increase the produce.

No other openings can be seen in Europe.

Colonies: A warning against gifts of colonial possessions. This is no solution of the food problem. Blockade!

If fate forces us into a showdown with the West it is good to possess a largish area in the East. In war time we shall be even less able to rely on record harvests than in peace time.

The populations of non-German territories do not render military service and are available for labour service.

The problem "Poland" cannot be dissociated from the showdown with the West. Poland's internal solidarity against Bolshevism is doubtful. Therefore Poland is also a doubtful barrier against Russia.

Success in war in the West with a rapid decision is questionable and so is Poland's attitude.

The Polish régime will not stand up to Russian pressure. Poland sees danger in a German victory over the West and will try to deprive us of victory.

There is therefore no question of sparing Poland and we are left with the decision:

*To attack Poland at the first suitable opportunity.*

We cannot expect a repetition of Czechia. There will be war. Our task is to isolate Poland. Success in isolating her will be decisive.

Therefore the Führer must reserve to himself the final order to strike. It must not come to a simultaneous showdown with the West (France and England).

If it is not definitely certain that a German-Polish conflict will not lead to war with the West then the fight must be primarily against England and France.

*Thesis:* Conflict with Poland—beginning with an attack on Poland—will only be successful if the West keeps out of the ring.

If that is not possible it is better to fall upon the West and finish off Poland at the same time.

Isolating Poland is a matter of skilful politics.

Japan is a difficult proposition. Though at first she was rather reluctant to collaborate with us for various reasons, nevertheless it is in Japan's own interests to proceed early against Russia.

Economic relations with Russia are only possible if and when political relations have improved. In press comments a cautious trend is becoming apparent. It is not ruled out that Russia might disinterest herself in the destruction of Poland. If Russia continues to agitate against us, relations with Japan may become closer.

An alliance of France—England—Russia against Germany—Italy—Japan would lead me to attack England and France with a few devastating blows.

The Führer doubts whether a peaceful settlement with England is possible. It is necessary to be prepared for a showdown. England sees in our development the establishment of a hegemony which would weaken England. Therefore England is our enemy and the showdown with England is a matter of life and death.

*What will this conflict be like?*

England cannot finish off Germany with a few powerful blows and force us down. It is of decisive importance for England to carry the

war as near as possible to the Ruhr. French blood will not be spared (West Wall!!). The duration of our existence is dependent on possession of the Ruhr.

The Dutch and Belgian air bases must be militarily occupied. Declarations of neutrality can be ignored. If France and England want a war between Germany and Poland to lead to a showdown then they will support Holland and Belgium in their neutrality and have fortifications built in order eventually to force them to join company with them.

Belgium and Holland will yield to this pressure albeit under protest.

Therefore, if England wants to intervene in the Polish war, we must make a lightning attack on Holland. We must aim at establishing a new line of defence on Dutch territory as far as the Zuyder Zee. The war with England and France will be a war of life and death.

The idea of getting out cheaply is dangerous; there is no such possibility. We must then burn our boats and it will no longer be a question of right or wrong but of to be or not to be for 80,000,000 people.

*Question: Short or long war?*

Everybody's Armed Forces and/or Government must strive for a short war. But the Government must, however, also prepare for a war of from ten to fifteen years' duration.

History shows that wars were always expected to be short. In 1914 it was still believed that long wars could not be financed. Even today this idea buzzes in a lot of heads. However, every State will hold out as long as it can unless it is immediately seriously weakened (for instance the Ruhr). England is similarly vulnerable. England knows that to lose the war means the end of her world power.

*England* is the motive force driving against Germany. Her strength lies in the following:

(1) The Briton himself is proud, brave, tough, dogged and a gifted organizer. He knows how to exploit every new development. He has the love of adventure and the courage of the Nordic race. The increase in quantity involves a lowering of quality. The German average standard is higher.

(2) England is a World Power in herself. Constant for three hundred years. Increased by alliances. This power is to be regarded as embracing the whole world not only physically but also psychologically.

Add to this immeasurable wealth and the solvency that goes with it.

(3) Geopolitical security and protection by a strong sea power and valiant air force.

#### *England's weaknesses*

If in the last war we had had two more battleships and two more cruisers and had begun the battle of Jutland in the morning, the British Fleet would have been defeated and England forced to her

knees. It would have meant the end of the world war. In former times it was not sufficient to defeat the Fleet. To conquer England she had to be invaded. England could feed herself. Today she no longer can.

The moment England is cut off from her supplies she is forced to capitulate. Imports of food and fuel oil are dependent on naval protection.

Luftwaffe attacks on England herself will not force her to capitulate in a day. But if the Fleet is annihilated instant capitulation results.

There is no doubt that a *surprise attack* might lead to a quick decision. But it is, however, criminal for a government to rely on the element of surprise.

Experience has shown that surprise may fail because of:

(1) Betrayal of secrets to individuals outside the competent military circles.

(2) Some common occurrence that wrecks the whole action.

(3) Human shortcomings.

(4) Weather conditions.

The date for striking must be fixed well in advance. Over and above this one cannot endure tension long. It must be taken into account that weather conditions may render surprise attacks by the Fleet and Luftwaffe impossible.

*Planning* must be based on the most *unfavourable* conditions.

(1) *The aim* must be to deal the enemy at the start a smashing blow or *the* smashing blow. Here right or wrong, or treaties, play no part.

This is only possible if we do not "slide" into a war with England on account of Poland.

(2) *Preparations* must be made for a *long war as well as* for a surprise attack and every possible intervention by England on the Continent must be smashed.

The Army must occupy the positions important for the Fleet and the Luftwaffe. If we succeed in occupying and securing Holland and Belgium, as well as beating France, the basis for a successful war against England has been created.

The Luftwaffe can then closely blockade England from western France and the Fleet undertake the wider blockade with submarines.

*Results:*

England cannot fight on the Continent.

The daily attacks by the Luftwaffe and the Fleet sever all vital arteries.

Time will decide against England.

Germany does not bleed to death on land.

The necessity of *such conduct of the war* is proved by the World War

and military operations since. The World War *compels* us to draw the following *conclusions* for the conduct of war.

(1) Had the Fleet been stronger at the beginning of the World War or had the Army been switched to the Channel Ports the war would have had quite a different outcome.

(2) A country cannot be forced down by the Air Arm. All objectives cannot be attacked simultaneously and a few minutes' interval brings into action anti-aircraft devices.

(3) It is important to use all means ruthlessly.

(4) Once the Army in cooperation with the Luftwaffe and the Fleet has taken the most important positions, industrial production will cease to flow into the bottomless Danaid cask of the Army's battles but will be available for the benefit of the Luftwaffe and the Fleet.

Therefore the Army must be able to capture these positions. *The attack must be prepared according to plan.*

Study of this is the most important task.

The *aim* will always be to force England to her knees.

The effect of any weapon will decide a battle only as long as the enemy does not possess it.

This goes for gas, submarines and the Luftwaffe.

This applied to the Luftwaffe as long as, for instance, the English Fleet had no defence against it but that would no longer be so in 1940 and 1941. Against Poland, for instance, tanks will be effective as the Polish Army lacks defence against them.

Where the effect can no longer be regarded as decisive it must be replaced by surprise and masterly handling.

This is the *programme of attack*.

The programme demands

(1) The correct assessment of weapons and their effects, e.g.

(a) battleships or aircraft carriers: which is the more effective both in single cases and considered as a whole? The aircraft carrier is the better protection to a convoy.

(b) Is air attack on a factory more important than that on a battleship? Where are the bottlenecks in manufacturing?

(2) Rapid mobility of the Army. It must move straight from its barracks to overrun neighbouring countries.

(3) Study of the enemy's vulnerable points. These studies must not be left to the General Staff. Secrecy would then no longer be assured.

The Führer has therefore decided to order the setting-up of a small *planning staff in the OKW*, composed of representatives of the three branches of the Armed Forces and calling in, whenever necessary, the three Commanders-in-Chief or their Chiefs of Staff. The staff will have to keep the Führer currently informed and report to him.

This planning staff will undertake the planning preparations for the

operations to the utmost degree and the resultant technical and organizational preparations.

The object of any of the schemes drawn up is the concern of no one outside the staff.

However much our enemies may increase their armaments they must, at some time or other, come to the end of their resources and our armaments will be the greater.

French age groups yield only 120,000 recruits!

We shall not be forced into a war but we will not be able to avoid one.

*Secrecy* is the decisive prerequisite for success. Our objects must be kept secret from both Italy and Japan. As for Italy, we shall continue to abide by the Maginot Line break-through, which is to be studied. The Führer thinks this break-through possible.

On studying the problem as a whole, coordination (grouping together) of the branches of the Armed Forces is important.

*The object—*

- (1) Study of the problem as a whole,
- (2) Study of how to set about it,
- (3) Study of the resources needed,
- (4) Study of the necessary training.

Members of the staff must be men of great imagination and the highest specialist competence as well as officers of sober and critical judgement.

*Principles to be applied to this work.*

- (1) No one to be initiated who does not have to be.
- (2) No one to know more about it than he has to.
- (3) When is the latest for him to know? No one to know anything sooner than he has to.

In reply to Field Marshal Göring the Führer lays down that:

- (a) the branches of the Armed Forces determine what is to be constructed;
- (b) nothing will be changed in the shipbuilding programme;
- (c) the armaments programme will be completed by 1943 or 1944.

Certified correct.

SCHMUNDT, Lt. Col.



## No. 434

7801/E571269

*The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

HELSINKI, May 24, 1939—1:23 p.m.

No. 70 of May 24

Received May 24—2:20 p.m.

Pol. II 1825.

With reference to your telegram No. 85 of May 23.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of the frequently expressed desire by Finland to remain outside the Anglo-Russian negotiations, the latest Russian proposal to the British Government of May 14 included Finland in the list of countries to be guaranteed.<sup>2</sup> In response to a Finnish *démarche* in London the British Government stated yesterday that they would not accept any Russian proposal which included Finland.

The Russian Government have indicated to Finland that Russia as well as Sweden wishes to guarantee the Aaland Islands. The Finnish Foreign Minister thinks this is absurd, and considers the latest Russian attitude in the Aaland Islands question to be a manoeuvre in the diplomatic game between Moscow and London.

BLÜCHER

<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 419, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 520.

## No. 435

2050/576520-25

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

May 24, 1939.

RECORD OF THE INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CONFERENCE IN THE  
FOREIGN MINISTRY ON MAY 24

List of those present is enclosed.<sup>1</sup>

Minister Clodius declared that the conference was *confidential* on account of its secret subject matter.

Referring to the known decision by the Reich Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> that deliveries of war equipment to Turkey are to be stopped for the time being for reasons of foreign policy, Minister Clodius laid down the following agenda:

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2153/469305). In addition to Ambassador Papen, representatives attended from the Foreign Ministry, the Ministries of Economics, Finance and Food, the Four Year Plan, the Reichsbank, the Air Ministry, and the OKW.

<sup>2</sup> No record of this decision has been found, but see documents Nos. 321 and 454.

I. Delivery, or non-delivery, of war equipment to Turkey, taking into account the present state of orders.<sup>3</sup>

II. Current normal German transactions for deliveries to Turkey.<sup>4</sup>

III. The German 150 million credit for Turkey.

IV. Discussions between the German Government Committee for Turkey and the Turkish Committee in Ankara.

#### I. Delivery of War Equipment.

Commander Schottky stated on behalf of the Reich Minister of Economics that the breaking of binding contracts could not be approved. A breach of contract had already occurred in respect of four of the 24 cm howitzers to be delivered by the Skoda Works, and twelve of the torpedoes to be delivered by the Germania-Werft. Both items of equipment had been passed by the Turks and were lying ready for despatch at the manufacturing firms. The Reich Ministry of Economics could not remain indifferent as to whether the German supplying firms had to break more contracts or not. The effects of the German attitude would be disastrous for future economic contracts with foreign countries, especially as we already had to fight British propaganda which was casting doubts on Germany's good faith in keeping contracts. Therefore the Ministry of Economics must, from its point of view, demand the immediate release of the war equipment which had been manufactured and passed. The Turks had in the meantime realized that the statements of the German firms about non-delivery and delay in delivery owing to general difficulties were merely excuses, and that the firms' actions were determined by the authorities.

In this connection Minister Clodius referred to a letter from the Reichsgruppe Industrie—AGK, which states that the Turkish officer responsible for passing the goods, who was staying at the Skoda Works, had been notified of the OKW decision regarding non-delivery of the war equipment ordered, and the reason given was that the equipment was needed by the German Wehrmacht for experimental purposes. The Turkish officer thereupon at once reported to Ankara,

<sup>3</sup> A summary of the state of deliveries of war material to Turkey dated May 17 (not printed, 96/107826-27), shows that on May 1, 1939, firms in Germany and the Protectorate had contracts for 124,592,000 RM. Guarantees of payments and delivery to the amount of 53,968,000 RM had been given to Turkey. Turkey's cash payments to German firms amounted to 16,000,000 RM, to Protectorate firms to £1,123,000, while 14,500,000 RM was outstanding for material already delivered. The value of war material already in transit to Turkey was 6,486,000 RM. Thus the immediate loss to Germany (guarantees and payments outstanding) would be 70,468,000 RM.

<sup>4</sup> A memorandum by Clodius, dated May 10 (not printed, 96/107830-33), and entitled *The Possibility of Economic Measures Against Turkey*, analyses German-Turkish trade, the most important item of which, chrome ore, Germany could not easily obtain elsewhere. The stoppage of trade, however, would more seriously affect Turkish than German economy, as, apart from chrome ore, Germany could obtain elsewhere the goods imported from Turkey, whereas the latter would find it difficult to dispose of her goods in other markets. The Turkish rearmament programme would be seriously affected. It could be expected that Britain would try to compensate Turkey for the loss of the German markets. For the present, war material would not be delivered to Turkey, and negotiations for new agreements were to be treated in a dilatory manner.

and he was ordered by his superiors to leave immediately if the delay in delivery was not rectified within a short time. If the Turkish officer did leave, it could be expected that all orders would be cancelled. Reports from other German firms show that the officers engaged on passing material there have obviously received similar instructions from their departments at home.

Oberregierungsrat Ter-Nedden (Ministry of Economics) said that it was a matter of urgent necessity to ascertain whether Germany intended to observe correct commercial relations towards Turkey or not. If the former were the case, no difference could be made between war equipment and general commercial goods, as indeed in the agreements at present in force it was agreed that supplies of war equipment be paid for under the clearing system in the same way as other goods.

In reply to the statements by the representatives of the Ministry of Economics, Minister Clodius pointed out that whether war equipment could be delivered was not a subject for discussion, as it had been unequivocally decided in principle that it should not. This decision naturally applied chiefly to equipment that was of primary military importance, such as the heaviest artillery and aircraft. Other arms of less importance had already been released. Minister Clodius considered that the purpose of the inter-departmental conference was to examine how the German delivery obligations could be classified according to their military character and delivery dates with the object of first finding a solution which would create as little cause for friction as possible between Germany and Turkey.

During discussion on this question which Minister Clodius had outlined, it transpired that, on a report by Colonel General Keitel, the Führer and Chancellor had made a decision of which the Foreign Ministry had not yet been informed, though all the other departments concerned had received notice of it from OKW. As a result of this decision by the Führer the extent of the consignment now at issue was reduced to:

- 4 24 cm Skoda howitzers
- 12 torpedoes
- 2 submarine guns
- 10 aircraft.

German firms were already in arrears with these or would be by the end of June.

After detailed discussion, agreement was reached on the following points:

1. The four 24 cm howitzers would not be delivered. It was felt that it would be desirable for Ambassador von Papen to give the reason why these deliveries were not for the moment being made, in his political discussions with the Turkish Government.

2. The High Command of the Wehrmacht would examine, and if

possible make a decision on the question whether, in view of their slight military value, the torpedoes and submarine guns could be released.

3. The Air Ministry would examine and make a decision on the question whether some of the first group of aircraft, which was to be ready in June, could be released.

In case of approval of the above result of the inter-departmental conference, time would be gained for the political negotiations till the beginning of July, without Turkey being able to charge Germany with breaking agreements. In that case, the question as to whether a fresh decision was necessary on the treatment of equipment to be delivered during July under the agreement, need not be examined until the end of June.

## II. Current Transactions.

It was agreed that the current delivery transactions should be continued, especially as Germany had particular interest in purchasing Turkish raw materials, in particular chrome ore. For the present, fresh transactions for large consignments from Germany should not be entered into, but in cases of particular urgency the departments concerned (Ministry of Economics and Foreign Ministry) reserved the right to give their special consent.

## III. Credit Agreement.

According to the Agreement made in Berlin on January 16 last<sup>5</sup> on granting a credit of 150 million RM, this will only come into force on a special Exchange of Notes in Ankara. As far as Turkey is concerned the conditions for such an Exchange of Notes have been created by the ratification of the Credit Agreement by the Turkish National Assembly on May 9.

The representatives of departments agreed that, under present circumstances, the putting into force of the Credit Agreement could not be entertained from the political point of view.

## IV. Negotiations of the Government Committees.

The German-Turkish Agreements of July 25, 1938,<sup>6</sup> on trade and payment transactions between Germany and Turkey remain in force as stipulated until August 31, 1939. During May, 1939, the German and Turkish Governments must decide whether the Agreement should be extended for another year. Ankara was chosen as the meeting-place for these discussions between the two Government Committees by agreement between Secretary General Numan Mene-mencioglu and Minister Clodius.

It was agreed that, in view of the present political situation, it did not seem advisable to let the two Government Committees meet now. Should the political situation improve there would be the possibility

<sup>5</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 557.

<sup>6</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 549.

of a further provisional application of the Agreements of July 25, 1938, for a short period. If necessary the Government Committees could then meet in Ankara in September.

R[IPKEN]

# No. 436

2986/584668

## *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 161 of May 25

BUDAPEST, May 25, 1939—12 midnight.

Received May 26—5:30 a.m.

The support given to Arrow Cross<sup>1</sup> members by German agencies, in particular the despatch to Hungary of a single consignment of 100,000 copies of a defamatory pamphlet called *Green Book*, obviously printed on German paper and sent mainly from the Post Office No. 2, Charlottenburg (postmarked May 17, 7:00 a.m.), and the transfer of over 1,000,000 pengös, of which details are to be published after the elections, has, as I am told by the Foreign Minister and other politicians, much annoyed Government and public opinion. Csáky emphasized that he felt this action, in which he knew that not the Reich Government, but certain agencies in Vienna,<sup>2</sup> were involved, and also irredentist utterances from beyond Sopron, to be a stab in the back to his efforts, expressed in his election speech,<sup>3</sup> to win confidence here for German policy towards Hungary. The Government party was now being sharply attacked, in part by its own supporters, for thankless compliance with German desires, since three *Volksdeutsche* of the Basch<sup>4</sup> Group were campaigning on the Government list.

Basch, too, complained to me about meddling and also emphasised that the Arrow Cross Party were appearing as the strongest opponents of the German group during the election campaign.

A supplementary despatch<sup>5</sup> is on the way.<sup>6</sup>

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Hungarian Fascist Party.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 300 and footnote 7 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> Elections were held in Hungary on May 28-29.

<sup>4</sup> Antonin Basch, leader of a German national group in Hungary.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (2986/584671-73).

<sup>6</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "State Secretary: Please investigate this and stop the nonsense in Vienna once and for all. Report please. R[ibbentrop]". (ii) "Under State Secretary: a memorandum on this please. The necessary action has already been taken. W[eizsäcker] 27/5". In an express letter of May 31 (not printed, 2986/584674-75) Heimbürg asked the Reichsführer-SS to take action against Arrow Cross members in Germany and Austria along the lines of the letter of May 23 (not printed, 7796/E566078-81). With this letter Woermann had forwarded to the Reichsführer-SS and also to the Propaganda Ministry and the Foreign Affairs Office of the NSDAP the memorandum of May 8 from the Hungarian Legation (not printed, 7796/E566070-77), in which complaints were made about the political activities of the Hungarian National Socialist Party and the Hungarian Movement in Germany; at the same time he had requested that the particulars given in the memorandum be investigated and, in the event of their proving correct, that the organizations of the parties in question be dissolved and their offices closed.

## No. 437

103/111330-31

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 451

BERLIN, May 25, 1939.

1) The Anglo-Russian negotiations now point to a conclusion,<sup>1</sup> in which Britain and Russia would make mutual concessions, Britain regional and Russia material; i.e., Britain no longer seems to wish to restrict the territorial scope of the treaty, whilst Russia would forgo her demand for all-embracing assistance. The outcome would therefore probably be a relationship of solidarity in the event of attack by a third Power, without unconditional armed assistance.

If these suppositions are correct, it still remains open how far the Russian Government will, in actual fact, allow themselves to be entangled in a European conflict. Rather it seems that there still remains fairly wide scope for action in Russo-German relations. It should be our aim to prevent Anglo-Franco-Russian relations from assuming a still more binding character and becoming intensified any further.

2) A German move in Moscow at the present moment is only of value if it is taken seriously by the Russians; otherwise it would be worthless or even dangerous: that is, Moscow would, *inter alia*, forthwith play it off against us in Tokyo.

The following might therefore be contemplated:

a) A conversation by Herr Hilger in the Russian Foreign Ministry in continuation of his normal conversations there. Herr Hilger could here refer to the preparatory economic work, at which he had been present in Berlin during recent weeks, and which was concerned with intensifying Russo-German trade. There would also be no objection to Herr Hilger mentioning quite casually of his own accord that he did not wish to touch on politics but that, nevertheless, he thought *all* possibilities remained open between Germany and Russia.

b) A request to the Italian Ambassador in Moscow, Signor Rosso, to make clear in a suitable manner German readiness for Russo-German contacts. Here Signor Rosso could refer to recent information about Ciano's visit to Berlin.

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<sup>1</sup> On May 24, Chamberlain had made a statement in the House of Commons on the negotiations with the Soviet Government in which he said that, as a result of the Foreign Secretary's conversations in Paris and Geneva, "all relevant points of view have now been made clear and I have every reason to hope that, as a result of proposals which H.M. Government are now in a position to make on the main questions arising, it will be found possible to reach full agreement at an early date". See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 347, col. 2267.

A request to this effect to Rosso by Count Schulenburg would naturally need to be supported by instructions from Rome to Rosso.

c) A conversation between the Foreign Minister and the Russian Ambassador, Merekalov, concerning the date of whose return enquiries have been made in Moscow.<sup>2</sup> A reply to these is still outstanding.

Herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 96 of May 24 (not printed, 695/260421) Weizsäcker had asked Moscow to ascertain when Merekalov would return to Berlin. In telegram No. 76 of May 25 (not printed, 695/260421-22) Schulenburg replied that Merekalov was in Moscow as a delegate to the session of the Supreme Soviet which began that day, and would probably continue for about ten days.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Additions to the above may be made orally (after any further reports coming in today)."

## No. 438

43/29423

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, May 25, 1939.

#### CONFIDENTIAL REPORT<sup>1</sup>

In response to an enquiry, the Yugoslav Legation in Berlin has confirmed Prince Regent Paul's forthcoming visit. In reply to the question whether any pacts or agreements between Germany and Yugoslavia, or Yugoslavia's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact, were to be expected, the evasive answer was given that this was merely a "*visite de politesse*". There was no reason at all for concluding special agreements or treaties, since relations between Germany and Yugoslavia were completely clarified.

Foreign journalists in Berlin are now making conjectures amongst themselves to the effect that, although the Yugoslav Legation is showing a friendly spirit, nevertheless a certain tendency to belittle the political importance of Prince Paul's visit can be seen.<sup>2</sup>

L[IKUS]

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's hand: "[For] F[ührer]."

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "The Yugoslavs must be handled toughly. R[ibbentrop]."

## No. 439

2810/548594

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 180 of May 26

WASHINGTON, May 26, 1939—12:48 p.m.

Received May 26—8:40 p.m.

Pol. IX 1171.

The arrest of Kuhn, leader of the German-American Bund, for embezzlement is the final result of the systematic campaign carried on against him under the direction of La Guardia,<sup>1</sup> a campaign which, *inter alia*, also serves the purpose of diverting public attention from numerous judiciary scandals in which senior American judges are involved.

Kuhn's conduct of affairs was always obscure, especially as he exercised exclusive control over his organization and was answerable [*sic* ? only to himself] for the application of incoming moneys. The prosecution accuses him *inter alia* of wrong entries of sums which he used for himself and, further, of embezzling the proceeds of the meeting in Madison Square Gardens,<sup>2</sup> and of tax evasion.

There is no doubt that the Public Prosecutor, Dewey, who is looked upon as Republican candidate for the Presidency, will, for reasons of election tactics, conduct the case with a view to sentencing Kuhn to imprisonment and thereby finishing him politically.<sup>3</sup>

THOMSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Mayor of New York.<sup>2</sup> On Feb. 20, 1939; see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 527.<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "As a result of discussion with the Under State Secretary and Ambassador Dieckhoff, no action to be taken. S[chlimpert] 29.5."

## No. 440

2943/570109

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 77 of May 26

Moscow, May 26, 1939—8:30 p.m.

Received May 26—11:30 p.m.

Pol. VI 1380.

With reference to my report No. A 1039 of May 25.<sup>1</sup>

I have been told in confidence by the Swedish Minister here that, on May 19, Molotov addressed an enquiry about the fortification of the

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2943/570114-16).



Aaland Islands to the Finnish Minister here, who promised to pass it on, remarking that the Finnish Government would probably not comply with the request.<sup>2</sup> On May 23, the Minister informed the Soviet Government that his Government could give no information whatsoever on the nature or extent of the fortification of the Aaland Islands, as the Finnish Government had not given this information to other Governments either, and as it was a military secret. At the same time the Minister apparently made a generally reassuring statement on the fortification of the Aaland Islands.

*Izvestia* of May 26 adopted a still stronger attitude towards the Aalands question than had *Pravda* of May 25. It said that the Soviet Union was the party chiefly interested, and declared that the Aalands Convention could not be altered without the consent of the Soviet representative on the Council of the League of Nations. The Soviet Government would insist that discussion of the Aalands question in the Council of the League of Nations should be adjourned.<sup>3</sup>

SCHULENBURG

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 419.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 38 of May 28 (not printed, 2943/570111-12) Krauel reported from Geneva that no resolution on this subject had in fact been passed by the Council of the League of Nations.

## No. 441

103/111334-45

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

[Draft]<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, May ..., 1939.

Telegram of instructions to Ambassador Schulenburg in Moscow.

Since the latest reports indicate that the Anglo-Russian pact negotiations may shortly lead to a positive result in one form or another, it seems appropriate that in further conversations with the Russians we should emerge from our reserve more markedly than has been contemplated hitherto. I therefore request you to call on Molotov as soon as possible and conduct a conversation with him on the following lines:

1) In your previous conversation<sup>2</sup> Molotov made the intensifying of economic relations dependent on a clarification of political relations between Germany and Soviet Russia. The Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin has also expressed himself along similar lines on various

<sup>1</sup> This draft, which is otherwise undated, bears an unsigned marginal note: "Submitted in this version to the Führer 26.5" and in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Cancelled, to be filed. W[eizsäcker] 27 [May]". See also document No. 446.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 424.

occasions.<sup>3</sup> The German Government have no hesitation whatever in submitting their views on Russo-German relations quite frankly to the Soviet Government.

2) In past years the conduct of German foreign policy has for the most part been dominated by opposition to the Comintern. It has been the first task of National Socialism to build up a new strong Germany, which is absolutely secure from any infiltration of communist tendencies. This task is accomplished. Of course we shall, in future also, rigorously suppress any communist agitation within Germany and any Comintern influence from without.

3) It is a different matter, however, with the question of shaping foreign relations between the two States of Germany and Soviet Russia, if we in Germany can proceed from the assumption that the Soviet Government, for their part, will desist from aggressively attacking Germany with communist and world-revolutionary ideas carried into Germany itself. From certain events in recent months we have thought we were able to detect signs that Russia's views had undergone a change in this respect. This we would indeed fully understand, considering, for instance, the course of the Spanish Civil War and, on the other hand, the fact of the extraordinary growth of Germany's strength at home and abroad. We have thought we could recognize certain signs that Soviet views were tending in this direction in Stalin's speech in March.<sup>4</sup>

4) If this assumption is correct, then we can establish without hesitation that a real opposition of interests in foreign affairs does not exist between Germany and Soviet Russia. In any case, we for our part do not see any complex of questions in which our mutual interests are directly opposed to each other. For these reasons we can well imagine that the time has come to consider a pacification and normalizing of German-Soviet Russian foreign relations.

5) This German view has already found expression in certain respects in recent months. The earlier press polemics against Soviet Russia have been substantially toned down. If this should be regarded in Moscow merely as temporary tactics, attention should be drawn to the tangible fact that, for example, our attitude towards the question of the Carpatho-Ukraine and our leaving it to Hungary shows that we are completely devoid of expansionist intentions over the Ukraine. If the Polish Foreign Minister has represented our intentions in this respect differently, as we have reason to believe, this is a purely tendentious invention, the motives for which are obvious.

6) The chief factor in German foreign policy is the close relationship with Italy, now sealed by the Pact of Alliance. This Alliance, as is evident from the very nature of things, is not directed against Soviet

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 332 and 406.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 1.

Russia and does not affect her interests, even indirectly, in any way. It is exclusively directed against the Anglo-French combination. As to our relationship with Japan, we declare quite frankly that we have every intention of continuing to foster and strengthen these relations. It is also a fact that the German-Japanese relationship has developed historically from the Anti-Comintern slogan. This slogan does not however signify the actual, politically realist, essence [*den eigentlichen realpolitischen Kern*] of what we now have in mind in fostering German-Japanese relations. In this we are thinking rather of our common opposition to Britain. Because of our good relations with Japan we believe we are now in a position to counteract Russo-Japanese differences; in any case we, for our part, have no interest of any sort in aggravating such differences and we also believe that we can contribute towards Japanese foreign policy gradually adopting a course which will not bring it into conflict with Russia.

7) Our differences with Poland are well-known. We take the view that the problems of Danzig and the Corridor will have to be solved some time; for our part we are not considering forcing a solution by means of war. If, however, against our wishes, it should come to hostilities with Poland, we are firmly convinced that even this need not in any way lead to a clash of interests with Soviet Russia. We can, even today, go so far as to say that when settling the German-Polish question—in whatever way this is done—we would take Russian interests into account as far as possible. Viewed from the purely military angle Poland represents no problem at all for us. As matters stand at present the military decision could be imposed by us in such a short time that Anglo-French assistance would be illusory.

8) That is in fact decisive for an assessment of the present situation in Europe in terms of military policy. In view of our own military strength and the completion of our Western fortifications, Britain and France would be faced with a matter of life and death as a result of military action against Germany. We have every reason to doubt the extent to which these two States really are determined after all to attempt effective intervention on behalf of Poland. In any case we are certain of this much, that even if they should seriously risk such an attempt, it could not influence the decision of the Polish question. Any assistance would in any case come too late, since no one would be able to pierce the Western fortifications.

9) When the real balance of forces and interests are soberly weighed up, we are unable to see what could really induce Soviet Russia to play an active part in the game of the British policy of encirclement. From the reports available it seems to us that Moscow also realises that this would mean Soviet Russia undertaking a onesided liability without any really valuable British *quid pro quo*. We also take the view that Britain is by no means in a position to offer Soviet Russia a really

valuable *quid pro quo*, no matter how the treaties may be formulated. While all assistance in Europe is rendered impossible by the West Wall, Britain would by no means be in a position in the Far East to take effective action against Japan, who in any case possesses absolute naval superiority there. We are therefore convinced that Britain will once more remain faithful to her traditional policy of letting other Powers pull her chestnuts out of the fire. And we consider the whole present trend of British policy to be a sign of weakness, and, whatever the final wording of the alliance and guarantee agreements may be, we do not think that any really tangible political results will accrue from them.

10) Thus we are in no way afraid of British efforts at encirclement. In spite of this, however, we think it right to set forth our political intentions and views to the Soviet Government, without reserve, at this precise moment, in order to prevent the Soviet Government from taking their decisions in ignorance of the real state of affairs. If, in spite of having been informed of our intentions and views, the Soviet Government should deem it right to join with Britain and France in a solid bloc directed against Germany, they would then make definite enemies of Germany and Japan and would themselves have to take the consequences. As previously stated, we are at the moment primarily concerned in giving the Soviet Government information about other possibilities of developing Russo-German relations, and at least sparing ourselves the reproach that we had neglected to come forward with a clear statement at such a decisive moment.

11) All in all, for Russia to join Britain against Germany would only be understandable from the point of view of Russian interests if the Soviet Government were afraid of aggressive intentions on the part of Germany against Russia. As stated above, such intentions are far from our minds. If, however, the Soviet Government should receive your overtures in this direction with mistrust, just as we, indeed, are still naturally mistrustful of the Comintern's attitude, you should point out that we should jointly attempt to restore mutual confidence in the light of the above statements and put this to a practical test. Negotiations on economic questions etc., and finally also the official avowal of a return to normal in political relations, would furnish the opportunity for this. How the several stages on this course would have to be determined could be reserved for more detailed discussion, for which we are ready. I have no objections to your mentioning to the Russians, in the course of conversation, that the Japanese and Italians have been informed in broad outline of this Russo-German conversation.

For your information I would also observe that, if it should prove difficult to secure an interview with Molotov quickly, I should have no objection to your having the conversation with Potemkin or, still better, bringing it about via Hilger and Mikoyan.

In conclusion I would also observe that the conversations at your end should only be conducted orally and that nothing should be committed to paper.

RIBBENTROP

### No. 442

103/111329

#### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 99

BERLIN, May 26, 1939 [8:35 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>  
[Received May 27—12:20 a.m.]<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

With reference to my telegram No. 94.<sup>2</sup>

On his return Hilger will report to you on deliberations which have taken place here about possible further moves in Moscow. After Hilger's departure from Berlin these deliberations led to the following decision, after an exchange of views with the Japanese and Italian Embassies:<sup>3</sup>

The attitude of complete reserve ordered in telegram No. 94 still stands. You personally should not make any move until further notice, nor is Herr Hilger to seek contact, nor, finally, is it intended to send Herr Schnurre to Moscow shortly.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Moscow copy (695/260418).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 414.

<sup>3</sup> See *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 48, for Attolico's report of his telephone conversations on May 26 with Ribbentrop in Sonnenburg, and the latter's account of his conversations with Oshima, on this subject. No German record of these conversations has been found.

### No. 443

2943/570119

#### *The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 73 of May 27

HELSINKI, May 27, 1939—1:30 p.m.

Received May 27—3:00 p.m.

Pol. VI 1381.

The Finnish representative in Geneva<sup>1</sup> has received instructions to try to ensure that the League of Nations confines itself to taking note

<sup>1</sup> Rudolf Holsti, Finnish Minister in Switzerland and Permanent Delegate to the League of Nations.

of the consent of the signatory Powers and of any protest Russia might make, and to prevent a clause being inserted which would enable Russia to interfere in the Aalands question later. The Foreign Minister has the impression that the Russians wish to prove to Britain by their procedure that they are an active military factor. The Foreign Minister informed me in confidence that the Finnish Government had given instructions that all control measures concerned with Russian ships and aircraft should be tightened up for the next few days.

BLÜCHER

No. 444

174/135054

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, May 27, 1939—4:45 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Received May 27—11:45 a.m.

No. 223 of May 27

For the State Secretary personally.

With reference to my telegram No. 217 of May 23.<sup>1</sup>

In view of rumours of new conflicts in the Cabinet over the alliance, I requested information from the Army, whereupon my confidant gave me an account which may explain the contradictions reported in my previous telegram. The Foreign Minister had telegraphed the decision of the Five Ministers of May 20 to Berlin and Rome in terms which the Army rejected, because, under these terms, a state of war with Britain and France would not automatically arise but was made dependent upon the situation prevailing at the time. The Japanese Ambassadors in Berlin and Rome had refused to transmit this.<sup>2</sup> The Minister President had discovered this deviation from the decision after its despatch and had submitted his own amendment to the Cabinet. The War Minister, with the express assent of the Supreme War Council, is, with the Minister President, again fighting for a clearer wording of this essential point.

I pointed out emphatically to my confidant that the Navy's theoretical objections about the Western Powers were in flat contradiction to its action at Amoy<sup>3</sup> and that the Western Powers themselves were pressing for an alliance with the Soviets which must of necessity have serious consequences for Japan.

Personally my confidant reckons with the possibility of the Foreign Minister's resignation. A similar intimation was given by the Minister

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 427.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 447 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 32.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 400, footnote 4.

President's Private Secretary, who moreover seemed concerned about the continuance in office of the whole Cabinet. I hear from another source that the Emperor, during a report by Prince Kanin,<sup>4</sup> who put forward the Army's demands on the alliance, made his consent dependent on the Army and the Navy coming to an agreement.

In view of the stubborn resistance by opponents of the alliance, rumours have cropped up about terrorist plans by radical groups.

OTT

<sup>4</sup> Field Marshal Prince Kotohito Kanin, Chief of the Army General Staff.

## No. 445

2903/565929-33

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, May 27, 1939.

e.o. W IV 1976.

The attached German-Lithuanian Agreements of May 20 of this year<sup>1</sup> deal with three subjects:

- (1) The reorganization of trade relations between Germany and Lithuania.
- (2) Memel problems, in particular the treatment of Lithuanian interests in Memel.
- (3) The establishment of the Lithuanian Free Zone in the Port of Memel.

## I

1. The reorganization of trade policy was designed to link Lithuanian economy as closely as possible to that of the Reich. Accomplishing this task proved specially difficult because Lithuania proceeded from the opposite intention, namely, to avoid any sort of dependence on the Reich that was at all apparent from without. Therefore Lithuania rejected, e.g., the offer of a German investment credit. Attempts to institute joint economic planning for Lithuanian agricultural production never got beyond certain initial stages, e.g., on pigs (higher prices; increased deliveries during the second year of the Agreement) and on the cultivation of flax. When assessing the volume of trade with the Reich, Lithuania was most anxious not to exceed a definite percentage of her foreign trade. In addition, influence was brought to bear on

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2903/565818-928). The enclosure contains the following documents, signed on May 20, 1939, including appendices: (1) Treaty on the establishment of a Lithuanian Free Zone in the Port of Memel. (2) Trade Agreement. (3) Clearing Agreement. (4) Agreement on local frontier traffic. For the texts of the Agreements mentioned under (2), (3) and (4) see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 790-820, where some of the appendices are also printed. The majority of these were, however, not published.

Lithuania emanating in particular from Poland, and which found expression in the Polish, French and British press. Extravagant demands were imputed to us of turning Lithuania into an economic protectorate.

2. The Agreements concluded attained our object of the closest economic integration of Lithuania with the Reich without letting this appear so from without. In reckoning up the planned volume of imports and exports the German share is shown to be thirty per cent of Lithuania's exports and forty per cent of her imports. If to this be added what is further provided for Lithuanian trade with the Protectorate, and by special agreements, Germany's share appears as fifty per cent of Lithuania's imports and forty per cent of her exports. It is in our interest, in conversations and publications, to avoid in all circumstances presenting these matters in their actual scope.

The Agreements are valid for two years. They consist of the German-Lithuanian Trade Agreement, the German-Lithuanian Clearing Agreement and the German-Lithuanian Agreement on Local Traffic across the Frontier, with extensive confidential special agreements thereon.

## II

1. The negotiations on Lithuanian interests in the Memel Territory proved to be particularly difficult. Lithuania's financial position had received a heavy blow through the severance of the Memel Territory. It was all the more vital for Lithuania to retain a considerable proportion of her public and private assets, in some way or other, for her national economy. The questions were settled by Germany in a generous and amicable manner, far-reaching consideration being shown to Lithuanian interests. The task was made more difficult by local measures against Lithuanian interests, taken directly after the reincorporation, which had to be successively rescinded.<sup>2</sup> The legal position of Lithuanian individuals and undertakings in the Memel Territory is laid down in a letter to the Chairman of the Lithuanian Delegation (cf. p. 53 of the Agreement).<sup>3</sup> The legal position conforms in principle to the regulations on Rights of Settlement in the German-Lithuanian Commercial Treaty of October 30, 1928.<sup>4</sup> A special account (*Sonderkonto III*) has been opened for the transfer of Lithuanian credit balances, proceeds of liquidation, and the like, which will be cleared by additional deliveries of goods. Details of this are to be found in the Finance Protocol (p. 60 *et seq.*).<sup>5</sup>

2. The hitherto subsisting integration of the Memel economy with the Lithuanian economic area has been extensively taken into account. Industry in the Memel Territory, which is mainly geared to export to

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 292.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2903/565897).

<sup>4</sup> For the text of this Treaty of Commerce and Navigation see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 123, pp. 820-834.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (2903/565904-08).



Lithuania, is participating in future exports to Lithuania by quotas to the value of twenty million Litass. This holds good in particular for the textile industry. It is agreed that the Memel sawmills are to be employed as sub-contractors for Lithuanian timber in transit.

### III

1. In the negotiations on establishing the Lithuanian Free Zone in the Port of Memel, our aim was to ensure that the Lithuanian goods traffic in transit through Memel remain in future a paying proposition. To avoid the difficulties occasioned by the limitations of space in the present Port of Memel, at a request coming from East Prussia, Germany put forward the proposal to construct at Reich expense, a new port for Lithuania, three kilometres south of the present port, near Schmelz. In the meantime, a provisional free zone was to be established for Lithuania in the Port of Memel. Lithuania did not agree to the German proposal in this form. The Lithuanian Delegation insisted on first of all obtaining fully adequate free harbour facilities in the Port of Memel. The German proposal—construction of a new free port near Schmelz—has been assigned to a joint Technical Commission for study.

The settlement reached accords substantially with Lithuanian desires. Two Lithuanian free harbour zones are being established in Memel, with the necessary facilities and installations which provide sufficient space for Lithuanian goods traffic. As to the legal form, this is governed by the principles laid down in the Treaty of March 22, 1939.<sup>6</sup> The area will be leased for ninety-nine years. The draft of the lease was drawn up between the two delegations. The Lithuanian party to the Agreement is the Memel Harbour Company, whose articles of association were also laid down in the negotiations. Questions of detail relating to the various administrative bodies are still left open, and will be taken up during negotiations which will commence after Whitsun.

SCHNURRE

<sup>6</sup> Appendix to Article 3 of the German-Lithuanian Treaty for the reunion of the Memel Territory with the German Reich of March 22, 1939, entitled *Principles governing the establishment of a Lithuanian Free Zone in the Port of Memel*. For the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 610-611.

No. 446

276/178396-97

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BERLIN, May 27, 1939.

Sent May 30.

Received June 2.

MY DEAR COUNT SCHULENBURG: We answered your letter of the

22nd<sup>1</sup> at first in our telegram of yesterday,<sup>2</sup> which will probably surprise you less than Herr Hilger, who was witness at the birth of quite different instructions.<sup>3</sup> I therefore still owe you a word of explanation. We are of the opinion here that the Anglo-Russian combination certainly will not be easy to prevent. True there might even today still be a rather wide field for negotiations in which we could perhaps have been able to act, by means of more forthright speech, as a brake and with disturbing effect. The probability of success was however always assessed here as quite limited, so that one had to weigh up whether very frank language in Moscow, instead of being helpful, might not rather be harmful and perhaps even call forth a peal of Tartar laughter. In weighing these points a factor of some importance was that one link in the whole chain, namely a gradual conciliation between Moscow and Tokyo, was said by the Japanese to be extremely problematical. Rome also was somewhat hesitant, so that eventually the disadvantages of the far-reaching step envisaged were regarded as decisive. Thus the instructions we gave you are to stand and we now want to wait and see how deeply Moscow on the one side and Paris-London on the other mutually engage themselves.

Your reports on, and assessments of, the situation are naturally most welcome here at all times.

Our enquiry about the return of the Soviet Russian Ambassador here, Merekalov,<sup>4</sup> was only of significance in connection with the above-mentioned possible move towards the Kremlin.

Cordial greetings and best wishes,

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

P.S.

BERLIN, May 30, 1939.

To my above lines I must add that, with the approval of the Führer, an approach is nonetheless now to be made to the Russians, though a very much modified one, and this by means of a conversation which I am to hold today with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires. You will of course be kept officially *au courant*. I need therefore not go more deeply into the matter here.

W[EIZSÄCKER]

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 424.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 442.

<sup>3</sup> A draft letter to Schulenburg (103/111350-52) dated May ..., 1939, but marked "cancelled" reads: "Dear Count Schulenburg. I have received your letter of May 22 and have brought its substance to the notice of the Foreign Minister. We are sorry that resumption of the economic negotiations which we had envisaged will not take place for the moment. This is the more regrettable as it has meanwhile been possible here, in consultation with the competent economic departments, to construct a solid basis for these negotiations. Furthermore, the negotiations would have provided us, in the easiest way, with a neutral platform from which also to raise the question of normalization of political relations. We are therefore still desirous that, if possible, these negotiations should be restarted even now; but are racking our brains as to how this could be achieved without running the risk of meeting with a second refusal. To

## No. 447

174/135951-52

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 174

BERLIN, May 28, 1939.

Solely for the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 213 and 217.<sup>1</sup>

1) The formal communication made to you by General Majiri [*sic?* Machijiri] on May 20, on instructions from the Minister of War, to the effect that the Japanese Foreign Minister would inform us of any new positive decision by the conference of Japanese Ministers, on Sunday, May 21, at latest, has not proved correct. The Japanese Embassy here has so far not been able to give us any official information at all on the state of the matter.

2) Oshima gave the following information in a strictly confidential and unofficial conversation yesterday:<sup>2</sup> He had received a telegram from Arita, according to which the Japanese Government, in the event of a European conflict,<sup>3</sup> wish to reserve their decision on entering into a state of war. Oshima had, in a very strongly worded telegram to Arita, refused even to transmit this point of view to the German Government. Thereupon the War Minister had telephoned Oshima asking him for the time being to show restraint towards Arita so as not to disturb the discussions going on between the various elements in Tokyo. The

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 410 and 427.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 444 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 48.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 176 of May 30 (not printed, 174/135953), Weizsäcker amended the words "in the event of a European conflict" to read "in the event of a conflict between the Axis Powers and Great Britain and France", in order to avoid misunderstanding.

entrust the task of approaching Molotov and Potemkin to you personally again at the present moment, does not seem advisable to us, especially because of the reasons you have given. On the other hand, we think that Hilger's return could be used for re-establishing contact with Mikoyan or one of his colleagues. Hilger's return this time, after having, in the course of a fortnight's stay here, worked with Schnurre on constructing a basis for economic negotiations, is in itself a fact which, as he too thinks, would be sufficient reason for starting such a conversation. Hilger will, however, have to conduct the conversation in such a way as not to reiterate the definite request for resumption of the negotiations, as this might well result in a further rejection, which would make the situation even more difficult for us. Nevertheless Hilger could speak generally of his work here in order to hear what the Russians have to say. If the Soviets were then to bring up the question of creating the political prerequisite, Hilger could point out that, from the impressions he gathered in Berlin, a *détente* was certainly possible and that this would have come about spontaneously through the negotiations which we had in mind. This method seems to us more apposite than the attempt to put out feelers through private businessmen, which, in the conditions prevailing in the Soviet Union, certainly has no prospect of success. A decision in detail on the date and substance of Hilger's statement is left to you." See also document No. 441.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 437, footnote 2.

Army was firmly determined now to fight the matter out quickly, and that even at the risk of the Cabinet falling.

3) Without making use of the above confidential information from Oshima, please make it perfectly clear to your confidants now that the non-arrival of the communication of which you had been given formal notice, or of any other communication, has occasioned considerable misgivings both to the Italians and to ourselves. It is inevitable that, in view of this silence, the Japanese attitude is now beginning to be regarded with mistrust in Berlin and Rome. We can no longer understand what is actually happening in Tokyo and why the Japanese Government, at this advanced stage of the negotiations, are still continuing to avoid making their decision clear. Scepticism here is natural, being increased by happenings such as the attitude of the Japanese delegates at the Congress of the Universal Postal Union in Buenos Aires.<sup>4</sup>

[RIBBENTROP]

<sup>4</sup> Held Apr. 1-May 23, 1939. The Japanese delegation had failed to support the German claim to represent Bohemia and Moravia. The subsequent rejection of the German claim led to the German refusal to sign the new Postal Convention. In telegram No. 222 of May 27 (not printed, S196/E583034) Ott reported his protest against the Japanese action.

## No. 448

S360/E590556-58

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 181 of May 29

WASHINGTON, May 29, 1939—5:57 p.m.

Received May 30—3:45 a.m.

Pol. IX 1174.

With reference to my telegram No. 152 of May 2.<sup>1</sup>

Since the Foreign Policy Committees of Congress<sup>2</sup> have for weeks discussed the future of the Neutrality Act, with the sole result of full disagreement and lack of decision, the Government, in their turn, have at last felt obliged to intervene in the debate with the following proposals, which are formulated in Hull's letter of May 27<sup>3</sup> to Pittman and Bloom, the Chairmen of the Committees:

1) The embargo on export of arms, munitions and implements of war to be lifted. The licensing system for export and import through the National Munition Control Board to remain.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 308.

<sup>2</sup> The Senate Foreign Relations Committee under the chairmanship of Senator Key Pittman and the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs under the acting chairmanship of Representative Sol Bloom.

<sup>3</sup> For the full text of this letter see *Peace and War*, No. 130.

2) American ships irrespective of their cargoes not to be allowed to enter combat areas.

3) Travel by American citizens in combat areas to be restricted.

4) Goods of all types may only be exported to belligerents after transfer of title to the foreign purchasers.

5) Loans and credits may not be granted to belligerent nations, except for short term credits for goods.

6) Collections [of funds] for belligerents to be subject to supervision.

Re. 1) Conforms to the President's wish; it is America's right and duty to supply nations subject to aggression with the means of defence if they do not possess such means in sufficient quantities. Criticism by the opposition; situation of 1914 re-established. America again becomes an arsenal.

Re. 2) American ships can carry war material to neutral ports where, however, it will be reloaded on to ships of the belligerents.

Re. 3) Till now, total embargo on ships of belligerent Powers has been envisaged.

Re. 2) and 3) The proclamation of combat areas serves to avoid incidents in which Americans are continuously involved.

Re. 4) Of the "Cash-Carry" clause only "Cash" remains; American ships may in future transport war materials.

Re. 5) and 6) As before.

Hull bases the Government's proposal on the well known arguments that the prospects of maintaining peace will increase if peace-loving nations can count in advance on America's assistance against aggressor States, and further that, in the event of a European war, America's economic life must be preserved from disruptions. Hence, with certain self-imposed restrictions, it is necessary to return to neutrality as in international law. This knows of no embargo on exports to belligerents.

The Government's long awaited statement of their position shows once more that the American Government are firmly determined, subject to the preservation of their own trade interests, to supply the Powers, masters of the sea in war, with everything that the latter can pay for in cash. The trend of developments would be towards America's active participation in the war on the side of our adversaries. More detail on this is contained in despatch No. 980 of May 17<sup>4</sup> which is on the way.

THOMSEN

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 403.

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[EDITORS' NOTE: According to a despatch by Attolico to Ciano, dated May 29 (published in *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 53) Ribbentrop had that morning (Whit Monday) held a long telephone

conversation with Attolico and then summoned him to Sonnenburg for personal discussions, at which Gaus and Weizsäcker were also present. No record of these discussions has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. According to Attolico, they turned on a project of Ribbentrop's for some intervention in Moscow to forestall a successful outcome of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations. Ribbentrop, being doubtful of the possibility of a successful "direct intervention" by Germany or Japan, had at first proposed "indirect intervention" in favour of Germany by the Italian Ambassador in Moscow. On Attolico pointing out the disadvantages of such a course, it had been decided that Weizsäcker should have a conversation with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin the next day and the lines on which this should be conducted had been laid down [similar to those indicated in document No. 449 below]. Attolico had been asked by Ribbentrop to treat these discussions as purely personal and not, as yet, to inform Ciano about them, since Ribbentrop himself had not yet fully clarified his own ideas, nor had he submitted the question to the Führer. See also documents Nos. 437, 450 and 451.]

### No. 449

103;111368-71

#### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET<sup>2</sup>

[?BERLIN, May 29, 1939.]

I suggest that the request of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin for permission for the further maintenance of the Soviet Russian Trade Delegation in Prague as a branch of the Soviet Russian Trade Delegation in Berlin<sup>3</sup> be used as the occasion for the following statement, to be made by Herr von Weizsäcker to the Russian representative in Berlin.

1) The question of the continued maintenance of the Russian Trade Delegation in Prague is one of principle. For that reason the [Foreign] Minister had believed that he could not make a decision in this matter on his own responsibility but had rather submitted the matter to the Führer.

2) The Government of the German Reich would now like to know whether the Soviet Government wish their Trade Delegation in Prague to be maintained there permanently, or whether they have only a short,

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is undated. No evidence has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives to indicate when it was drafted. It would, however, appear to relate to the discussions held with Attolico on May 29, of which no German record has been found; see Editors' Note on p. 601.

<sup>2</sup> Written in Weizsäcker's hand; a marginal note by him reads: "To be filed (conversation with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires). W[eizsäcker] 30.5".

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 406.

limited period in mind. What, in the latter case, would be the duration of this limited period?

3) It is not easy for the Government of the German Reich, in the present circumstances, to consent at all to the maintenance of this Russian Trade Delegation, even under its title of Branch of the Berlin Office. In particular, to their last suggestion of taking up direct trade negotiations with Moscow, they received an answer in Moscow<sup>4</sup> from which they believe they must infer that the Soviet Government are at present little interested in such resumption and strengthening of German-Soviet trade relations. There is, in addition, the development of the foreign policy of the Soviet Union, which also calls for caution on the part of the German Reich Government with respect to the examination and granting of such Soviet Russian wishes, such as, in this case, that of the Prague Trade Delegation. For the Government of the Reich have no doubt that Russia seems to be inclined actively to support the British policy of encirclement directed against Germany. Therefore the Reich Government, for their part, too, in their own understandable interests, consider a clarification of this development as the necessary condition for displaying a specially accommodating attitude. But above all, as stressed in point 2, it would be important to know the duration of time which, in these circumstances, the Soviet Government have in mind in requesting permission for the continuance of their Prague Trade Delegation.

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 424.

## No. 450

103/111372-74

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, May 29, 1939.

1. We are faced with the fact that our Ambassador in Moscow had a talk with M. Molotov about the resumption of German-Soviet economic negotiations and that on this occasion M. Molotov made them subject to the clarification of political relations between Germany and Soviet Russia.<sup>2</sup> Of course, we ask ourselves whether M. Molotov wanted to express thereby a desire that a conversation between us on political relations should come to pass or whether he intended this to be regarded simply as a form of rejection.

2. They themselves as well as their Ambassador have from time to time indicated possibilities of discussing the political relations between

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<sup>1</sup> This document appears to be Weizsäcker's brief for his conversation with Astakhov. See Editors' Note on p. 601 and document No. 451.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 424.

Germany and the Soviet Union some day, and we ask ourselves whether this is in harmony with Molotov's views or whether we are dealing here with different points of view of their Embassy here and their Foreign Commissariat.

3. If they should desire to hold a political conversation with us, I would consider it a prerequisite that the aggressive promotion of the idea of world revolution be no longer an integral part of the present Soviet foreign policy.<sup>3</sup> If this prerequisite were really met—as certain signs might indicate—I could imagine that such a conversation might lead to useful results in the direction of a progressive normalization of German-Soviet relations.<sup>4</sup>

4. It is, however, very doubtful whether the state of affairs in Europe just at the moment promises success for such talks, since the Soviet Government are engaged in negotiations with Britain, which indicate that Moscow is already more or less finally resolved to enter actively into the British policy of encirclement. However,<sup>5</sup> it is of course up to their<sup>6</sup> Government to judge whether at this stage in the Anglo-Soviet negotiations they still see room for such a conversation with Germany.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Not to interfere in one another's domestic politics, then . . ."

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Ukraine".

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "ice cold".

<sup>6</sup> At this point "Ihrer" [your] has been typed evidently in error for "ihrer" [their].

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Spare the reproach of not having spoken. . . ."

## No. 451

103/111356-61

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

TOP SECRET  
St.S. No. 455

BERLIN, May 30, 1939.

The Soviet Russian Chargé d'Affaires called on me this morning at my request. I put forward as the subject of our conversation the Soviet Russian request that their Trade Delegation should be allowed to continue in Prague as a branch of the Trade Delegation in Berlin.<sup>1</sup> In my subsequent remarks, which the Chargé d'Affaires interrupted now and then with his own observations, I adhered closely to the instructions given to me.<sup>2</sup>

First I told the Chargé d'Affaires that the request of the Russian Government involved a question of principle, and that for this reason it had been referred to the Foreign Minister. Herr von Ribbentrop

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 406.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 601.



had submitted the matter to the Führer. At this point the Chargé d'Affaires pricked up his ears and he made sure by asking me again whether the Führer had really dealt with the matter.

I then continued that we would like to know whether the Trade Delegation in Prague was to be maintained permanently or only temporarily and if so, for what length of time. To this the Chargé d'Affaires replied at once that he personally could only state that there was still work of all sorts to be done in winding up current business in the Protectorate, but, apart from this, his Government had most probably been thinking of a permanent status.

In accordance with instructions I then went on to state that it would not be easy for us to give our consent to the maintenance of the Trade Delegation in Prague as we, i.e., Ambassador Count Schulenburg, had recently received from M. Molotov a not very encouraging pronouncement on the subject of our economic relations.<sup>3</sup> The Chargé d'Affaires showed himself to be informed of the contents of the talk, and under reservation of detailed instructions, interpreted it as meaning that Moscow wished to avoid a repetition of what happened last January,<sup>4</sup> i.e., they did not want to make preparations again for the trip of a German trade negotiator to Moscow only to receive a cancellation at the last moment, amidst the ridicule of the foreign press. Actually, M. Molotov had stated that political and economic matters could not be completely separated in our relations; a certain connection between the two did, in fact, exist. Apparently Potemkin, in his communication to the Chargé d'Affaires here, had expressed the matter in this way: that one could not play about with intended economic discussions.

After we had exchanged a few more words to clear up the above mentioned happenings of January last, I told the Chargé d'Affaires that I could agree with him that economic and political matters could not be entirely separated from each other, and it was for this very reason that I was having this conversation with him, because Britain's efforts with which we were familiar, to draw Russia into her orbit, pointed to a political orientation on the part of Moscow which we must take into account even in relatively minor questions such as that of the Soviet Russian Trade Delegation in Prague. I returned, therefore, to my question at the beginning of our conversation, namely, what length of time the Soviet Government envisaged for the business of their Trade Delegation in Prague.

The Chargé d'Affaires noted, at this stage of the conversation, that he would have to enquire again in Moscow as to what intentions they really had for the Trade Delegation in Prague and, furthermore, what Foreign Commissar Molotov had actually intended to say to Count

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 424.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 486, 487, 489 and 492.

Schulenburg. The Chargé d'Affaires let it be understood, on his own account and without more ado, that M. Molotov had, it was true, spoken with the customary Russian distrust but not with the intention of barring the door against further Russo-German discussions.

After the discussion had reached this point, I reminded the Chargé d'Affaires of certain conversations which he himself had conducted in this Ministry<sup>5</sup> and especially of statements made by his Ambassador,<sup>6</sup> now absent from Berlin, who had spoken to me in the middle of April of the possibility of a normalization and even further improvement of Russo-German political relations. From this point the conversation proceeded informally and I changed over to a purely conversational tone and also put aside paper and pencil.

I now reminded the Chargé d'Affaires of remarks by his Ambassador about the more moderate tone of the press on both sides for several months past. I mentioned that, to my knowledge, the topic of Soviet Russia had receded into the background in official German speeches of recent months. The Chargé d'Affaires confirmed this but held that it could be interpreted in different ways. Finally I said to the Chargé d'Affaires that the development of our relations with Poland, of which he was aware, had, in actual fact, made our hitherto restricted policy in the East more free. On the Chargé d'Affaires making some remarks in agreement, I told him that I personally saw the German attitude towards Soviet Russia in the following way: Germany was not narrow-minded, but she did not wish to impose herself either. Among the German political merchandise *one* item did not exist, namely, a predilection for Communism. We had given short shrift to Communists, and would continue to do so; on the other hand we did not expect from Moscow any predilection for National Socialism either. At this point the Chargé d'Affaires interposed with accounts of how Russian relations with Italy and particularly Turkey, as well as with other countries, could be normal or even very good although, in those countries, Communism found no mercy. He strongly emphasized the possibility of a very clear distinction between maxims of domestic policy on the one hand, and the attitude adopted in foreign policy on the other hand.

I then adhered to my figure of speech and stated that among our political merchandise there was also a pretty good selection for Russia, ranging from the normalization of our relations, at which the Russian Ambassador had hinted to me, up to an unyielding antagonism. Normalization was indeed obstructed by a lot of rubble, and I was convinced that many people would even like to pile it higher. The Chargé d'Affaires would certainly know that M. Beck, the Polish Foreign Minister, was also not entirely without his share of responsibility. One

<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 332 and 406.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 215.

could conduct interesting talks with M. Beck, but he appeared to me to have aged a little, because he sometimes suffered from a regrettable weakness of memory. Thus, for instance, Beck's interpretation of Germany's Ukrainian policy would best be refuted by Germany's conduct in respect of the Carpatho-Ukraine. However, I did not want enlarge on these things; I thought that Germany had proved that she could cope with Communism at home; nor did she have any fear in foreign policy. Whether there was still room at all for any gradual normalization of relations between Soviet Russia and Germany, after Moscow had perhaps already listened to the blandishments of London, I did not know. However, after both the Chargé d'Affaires and his Ambassador had used such open language in the Foreign Ministry, I wanted to avoid the reproach that we on our side had concealed and preserved silence on our own attitude. We did not ask anything from Moscow, we did not desire anything from Moscow; but neither did we wish Moscow to be able to tell us at a later date that we had erected an impenetrable wall of silence between us.

The Chargé d'Affaires, who had followed the talk attentively and had contributed to it a number of interjections not mentioned here, stated in conclusion that the ideological barrier between Moscow and Berlin had been, in reality, erected by us. Before our treaty with Poland we had rejected a Russian offer of alliance and until very recently there had been little comprehension here for the Russian thesis that foreign and domestic policy need not disturb each other. He believed that his Government had not wavered in this point of view and were still faithful to it today. In conclusion the Chargé d'Affaires stated that he would report home on our conversation, the second part of which he described, for his part, as a private one, and that he would request instructions from his Government as to what were their real intentions about the Trade Delegation in Prague, as well as whether he had correctly interpreted Molotov's conversation as in no way implying a rejection.

I did not, of course, ask the Chargé d'Affaires about the state of the Anglo-Russian negotiations; nor did he mention anything about them. However, it cannot be contested that in his remarks today about our political relations, he used basically the same language as hitherto and as his Ambassador did in the middle of last April. The Molotov-Schulenburg episode appears to me, therefore, to have been more the product of touchiness and distrust rather than a deliberate rejection.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 452

524/238905-08

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, May 30, 1939—10:40 p.m.

No. 101

e.o. Pol. V 1241 g.

For the Ambassador, for information.

Contrary to the tactics hitherto planned<sup>1</sup> we have now, after all, decided to make a certain degree of contact with the Soviet Union. Accordingly, in the absence of the Ambassador, I asked the Chargé d'Affaires, Astakhov, to call on me today.<sup>2</sup> The Soviet Russian request that the Prague Trade Delegation should be allowed to continue as a branch of the Berlin Trade Delegation provided the starting point of our conversation. Since the Russian request involved a question of principle it had been referred to the Reich Foreign Minister and he on his part had submitted the matter to the Führer. To my enquiry as to whether the maintenance of the Trade Delegation at Prague was to be permanent or for a limited transitional period, the Chargé d'Affaires remarked that in his personal view the Soviet Government were most likely thinking of a permanent arrangement. I replied that it would not be an easy matter for us to grant permission for the maintenance of the Trade Delegation in Prague as Ambassador Count Schulenburg had recently received from Molotov a not very encouraging pronouncement on the subject of shaping our relations. The Chargé d'Affaires, under reservation of detailed instructions, interpreted the conversation between Count Schulenburg and Molotov, of which he had knowledge, as meaning that Moscow wished to avoid repetition of what happened last January. In Molotov's view, political and economic matters could not be completely separated in our relations. Between the two a certain connection did in fact, exist.

After I had to some extent cleared up the happenings of January, I said to the Chargé d'Affaires that in our opinion also, economic and political matters in Russo-German relations could not be entirely separated and I was conferring with him particularly because Britain's efforts to draw Russia into her orbit pointed to a political orientation on the part of Moscow, of which we must take account even in relatively minor matters such as that of the Trade Delegation in Prague. I would therefore have to repeat my question as to how long the Soviet Government desired the Trade Delegation at Prague to continue. The Chargé d'Affaires at this stage of the conversation noted that he had to ask Moscow what the intentions there were regarding the Trade Delegation at Prague, and what Foreign Commissar Molotov had intended

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 442 and 446.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 451.

to say to Count Schulenburg. In his view, Molotov, it was true, had spoken with the customary Russian distrust but not with the intention of barring the door against further Russo-German discussions.

In this connection I recalled to the Chargé d'Affaires certain conversations which he himself had conducted in this Ministry and especially statements made to me by the Soviet Ambassador in the middle of April, about the possibility of a normalization and even further improvement of Russo-German political relations, and at this point I also referred to the more moderate tone of the Press on both sides for several months past, and above all to the fact that the development of our relations with Poland had made our hitherto restricted policy in the East more free. On the Chargé d'Affaires showing agreement, I said that in my personal opinion Germany was not narrow-minded towards Soviet Russia but neither did she wish to impose herself. We should continue to reject Communism as we, on the other hand, would not expect from Moscow any predilection for National Socialism. Here the Chargé d'Affaires strongly emphasized the possibility of a very clear distinction between the maxims of domestic policy on the one hand, and the attitude adopted in foreign policy on the other. I continued that Russia indeed was presented with a choice ranging between a normalization of our relations, at which the Russian Ambassador had hinted, up to an unyielding antagonism, though many people, as, for instance, the Polish Foreign Minister, were interested in hindering such normalization. Beck's interpretation of Germany's Ukrainian policy could, however, be best refuted by Germany's conduct over the Carpatho-Ukraine. Whether there was still room at all for a gradual normalization after Moscow had perhaps already listened to the blandishments of London, I did not know. However, after both the Chargé d'Affaires and the Ambassador had used such open language at the Foreign Ministry we wanted to avoid the reproach that we had preserved silence about our own attitude. We did not ask, neither did we desire anything from Moscow; however, we did not wish Moscow to be able to say to us later that we had erected an impenetrable wall of silence between us.

The Chargé d'Affaires replied that he believed that his Government were today still of the opinion that foreign policy and domestic policy need not disturb each other. He would report the conversation and request instructions from his Government, both as to their intentions about the Trade Delegation in Prague and as to whether he had correctly interpreted the statements of Molotov as in no way implying a rejection.

I got the impression from the conversation that the statements of Molotov should not be considered as a deliberate rejection. Instructions for further treatment of the subject are reserved.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 453

103/111379-80

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

## Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, May 30, 1939—[11:10 p.m.<sup>1</sup>]

No. 102

[Received May 31—5:40 a.m.<sup>1</sup>]

With reference to my telegram of today No. 101.<sup>2</sup>

In view of the course of today's talk with the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires here about which another telegram, for information, is under way, there are no objections here to Hilger getting in touch with Mikoyan of his own accord and without mentioning any instructions. The fact that Hilger has worked for two and a half weeks in Berlin with the competent authorities on constructing a basis for economic negotiations with the Soviet Union ought to be sufficient justification for his initiating such a talk on his own. However, Hilger would have to confine himself in any possible conversation to talking quite generally of his work here, without repeating the offer to resume negotiations. On the other hand, in view of Soviet touchiness on account of the recall of Schnurre some time ago, Hilger could try to remove doubts as to the sincerity of our former and present intentions to expand economic relations with the Soviet Union. If, in this connection, the political question is raised from the Soviet side, Hilger should simply point out that political questions have been the subject of a direct conversation between the State Secretary and the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires and that the political authorities are probably about to clarify the situation further.

If during this conversation the Soviet side expresses readiness to resume economic negotiations, Hilger could promise to get in touch with Berlin at once.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Moscow copy (695/260414-15).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 452.

## No. 454

7996/E575626-28

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy  
Department*

BERLIN, May 30, 1939.

MEMORANDUM ON FURTHER PROCEDURE TO BE ADOPTED  
TOWARDS TURKEY IN ECONOMIC MATTERS

I. After discussions with the German Ministries concerned and

Ambassador von Papen,<sup>1</sup> I suggest that the following procedure should be adopted towards Turkey in the economic field.

1) Current trading will be maintained. If during the next few months any constriction should prove advisable, this would be more effectively imposed only from September onwards, because it is during the latter months of the year that commodities which Turkey is most concerned to export, are exported from Turkey to Germany.

2) The German-Turkish Trade Agreement of July 25, 1938,<sup>2</sup> expires on August 31, 1939. The Agreement provides for the two Governments to decide, during the month of May, whether it shall be extended for another year. In the meantime it was agreed with the Turkish Government a considerable time ago to enter into negotiations in Ankara at the beginning of June over the extension and modification of the existing Agreement. The Turkish Government should now be notified that the German Government do not consider it opportune to conduct these negotiations at present. This will have the effect of keeping the Turkish Government in suspense until the autumn as to whether we are prepared to maintain the present Trade Agreement intact or with only slight amendments.

The same considerations apply to the German-Turkish Clearing Agreement, likewise concluded on July 25, 1938.<sup>3</sup> Over this Agreement too, Turkey will also remain in suspense if we do not extend it now.

If both Agreements lapse on August 31, any basis for German-Turkish trade will in fact be removed. The decision on this question, however, can be delayed for about another two to three months.

3) We should notify the Turkish Government that the German Government do not deem it opportune now to exchange Notes to bring the Credit Agreement of January 16, 1939,<sup>4</sup> into force. However, the Turks should not be given a definite answer on this question either, so that on this point also the decision could be kept open for some little while. This state of suspense cannot, however, last too long because negotiations are already in progress for a number of big contracts.

4) The deliveries of war material should continue in so far as they do not involve particularly heavy weapons. The 24 cm Skoda guns which have already been held up on instructions from the Führer<sup>5</sup> will therefore not be delivered in future either. Similarly, the firm of Krupp has been instructed not to deliver the nineteen 15 cm guns ordered from them, delivery of which was due to commence on June 8.

As to the military value of the aircraft a final opinion from the Air Ministry is still outstanding. In my view some of these aircraft might well be delivered, so as not to ruin all opportunities for the future and

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 435.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7237/E531294-305); see also vol. v of this Series, document No. 549.

<sup>3</sup> For the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1938, Part II, pp. 835-836.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 557.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 321.

to avoid the question of high penalties for infringement of contract coming up for discussion in this sphere also.

By instructions issued through Colonel General Keitel the Führer has, meanwhile, on May 14 again ordered that the aforementioned heavy guns be not delivered to Turkey. The firms are to be referred to the Ministry of Economics over any financial question resulting from this non-delivery. Eventually, there will be no alternative but to have the financial losses to the firms covered by the Ministry of Finance.

But, in the first place, Herr von Papen is to endeavour to justify to the Turks on political grounds the non-delivery of the heavy guns and to put forward that it is thus a question of *force majeure* as far as the firms are concerned. It seems possible, though not very probable, that the Turkish Government, in order not themselves to make a move which would strain relations with Germany still further, might desist, at least temporarily, from advancing their claims in civil law under the delivery contracts concluded.

II. The Turkish Ambassador has already approached me twice about the commencement of the negotiations, the bringing into force of the Credit Agreement and the withholding of the Skoda guns. I gave him the following preliminary answer:

1) Negotiations. It was not possible to see yet whether a delegation could at present be sent to Ankara. A final decision in this matter had not yet been reached. I had, however, to say frankly that I personally was not inclined to go with a delegation to Ankara just at this moment.

2) Bringing the Credit Agreement into force. I would have the technical details, put forward by the Ambassador, examined.

3) I personally knew nothing about the guns being withheld. I would make enquiries.

When the Ambassador enquired by telephone last Saturday what was the position on the several questions, I replied that I could not give him any further information at the moment.

If the programme outlined under I. above is approved, I should venture to suggest that Herr von Papen be entrusted with discussing the whole complex of problems in Ankara. In this event I should merely inform the Turkish Ambassador that Herr von Papen had been entrusted with making our attitude on the several questions known to the Turkish Government.

Meanwhile the Turkish Ambassador has addressed the attached *note verbale*<sup>6</sup> to the Foreign Ministry. The decision that only heavy weapons are to be withheld would dispose of the complaint about the torpedoes.

CLODIUS

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (7996/E575629-30). This Note, dated May 27, complained that delivery of torpedoes from the Deutsche Werke at Kiel and guns from the Krupp and Skoda works had been prevented, and protested against such action as unwarrantable interference by German military officials in commercial contracts.



## No. 455

509/235402

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 218 of May 30

ROME, May 31, 1939—12:03 a.m.

Received May 31—5:00 a.m.

Pol. IV 3375.

Count Ciano requested me this evening to point out again emphatically in Berlin, both on his own behalf and on behalf of the Duce, how very desirable it was that, during the forthcoming visit of Prince Regent Paul to Berlin, strong pressure should be exerted on him and on Cincar-Marković, and that their attention should be drawn, without possibility of misunderstanding, to the necessity, which brooked no delay, of stating Yugoslav policy towards the Axis Powers in unambiguous terms. Their policy as conducted at present warranted the greatest mistrust.<sup>1</sup> Ciano added that what mattered to him was a definite statement, irrespective of whether it was positive or negative.

MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 431.

## No. 456

533/242097-98

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 219 of May 30

ROME, May 31, 1939—12:03 a.m.

Received May 31—5:00 a.m.

Ciano started a long conversation, for which he had asked me to call on him this evening, with a detailed account of the course of the first visit of the new British Ambassador to the Duce on May 27,<sup>1</sup> which the Western democratic press had reported as being cordial. In actual fact it was probably the most frigid reception the Duce had ever accorded a diplomat. He had first listened to Percy Loraine's conventional courtesy phrases, standing and without saying a word in reply, until the Ambassador remarked that he desired faithfully to follow the Chamberlain policy, when he replied cuttingly that he regarded this policy as completely misdirected and pernicious. It was directed at the encirclement of the Axis Powers and thus expressly

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Percy Loraine; see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 651, 652, 653 and 660.

against Italy. He wondered if, in the prevailing circumstances, there was still any value at all attached to the Anglo-Italian Agreement of April last year<sup>2</sup> which Italy had loyally observed down to the smallest detail; when the Ambassador looked aghast at this the Duce demanded that he submit this question formally to his Government. The Ambassador's attempt to defend Chamberlain's policy the Duce further countered by saying that the German-Polish tension, as it had developed, must be charged exclusively to the account of Britain, who had stiffened Polish obstinacy, whereas otherwise the matters in dispute would have been settled long since. When the Ambassador objected that the Poles could not be expected "simply to accept the dictates of Hitler", he had replied with the greatest acerbity that naturally this was to be expected of them. More modest terms had been simply unthinkable. A further attempt by the Ambassador to justify British policy Mussolini had countered by saying that his verdict stood. The future would reveal whose view would turn out right. The Duce had also had some harsh words for the Anglo-Turkish agreements,<sup>3</sup> and had then broken off the conversation abruptly. On the way to the door the Ambassador had tried to start another conversation on non-political, purely personal matters, but had encountered frigid silence from the Duce who stared straight at the floor as he accompanied the Ambassador out.

Ciano gave an account of the conversation based on the entries in his diary,<sup>4</sup> which he always makes very carefully, and which he read out to me for the most part word for word.

MACKENSEN

<sup>2</sup> Of Apr. 16, 1938, brought into force on Nov. 16, 1938; see document No. 182, footnote 7.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483.

<sup>4</sup> See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entries of May 27-28, 1939.

## No. 457

174/185955

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

SECRET

No. 228 of May 31

TOKYO, May 31, 1939—8:20 p.m.

Received May 31—4:00 p.m.

For the Foreign Minister.

With reference to your telegram No. 147 [sic] of May 28.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with instructions, I have most strongly impressed upon my confidants the arguments in paragraph 3 of the telegram under reference and their views give the following contradictory picture:

<sup>1</sup> Evidently a typing error for 174 (document No. 447).

The Minister President's private secretary informed me, on instructions from the Minister President, that the latter was firmly resolved to put the alliance through and hoped to be able to transmit a decision to the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin in about three days.

My Army confidant, this time the Vice Minister of War<sup>2</sup> in person, requested me to inform the Reich Foreign Minister on behalf of the Minister of War,<sup>3</sup> that the Army in their daily negotiations with the Navy would certainly gradually overcome the latter's opposition and were employing for this purpose all arguments which could be effectively applied in support of our point of view. The Army again asks urgently for patience and confidence. The Vice Minister of War avoided my repeated attempts to obtain an explanation of the failure to transmit the decision of May 20<sup>4</sup> to the Reich Government. My Foreign Ministry confidant stated that, despite apparent agreement on the decision of May 20, immediately after its despatch fundamental differences of opinion had broken out afresh, which so widened the cleavage that the resignation of the Cabinet appears scarcely avoidable. Nevertheless, further negotiations, though tedious, would certainly lead to a solution satisfactory to us. All my confidants are agreed in their confidence as to a final solution of the alliance question in our favour, and in their plea for patience. They differed from each other in their assessment of the time factor from a few days to tedious negotiations following on the fall of the Cabinet. I have the impression that the Vice Minister of War's version comes closest to probable developments, especially since the Army is gaining increasing support from the middle ranks of the naval officers' corps for pressure on the Naval Command. Further information from my confidants confirms, in the main, the account in my telegram No. 223 of May 27<sup>5</sup> of the setback in Tokyo, where the Foreign Minister's conduct can possibly be attributed to typical Japanese vagueness when it comes to making decisions. The Vice Minister of War's embarrassment and reticence in the matter of the setback I would myself attribute to consciousness that the failure to achieve agreement within the Cabinet has thrown an unfavourable light on the entire Cabinet, and to efforts to avoid discussing the awkward question of responsibility.

OTT

<sup>2</sup> General Yamawaki. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 64.

<sup>3</sup> General Itagaki.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 410.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 444.

## No. 458

1625/988801-02

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 183 of May 31

LONDON, May 31, 1939—10:50 p.m.

Received June 1—3:00 a.m.

Pol. II 1880.

The British proposal to Soviet Russia which was handed to the Soviet Government by the British Ambassador in Moscow on May 27<sup>1</sup> contains, according to information from a reliable source, the following:

I. Great Britain, France and Soviet Russia give each other mutual pledges of immediate assistance if one of these States should be the object of direct aggression.

II. The same pledge of assistance is given for the event of one of the three States becoming involved in a war in carrying out pledges of guarantee towards third States.

III. Should one of the three States be approached by a non-guaranteed State for assistance in the event of aggression and decide to respond to this appeal for assistance, the two other States will likewise lend it their support.

The extent of the support to be given will be determined "in accordance with the principles of Article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant". This formula has been chosen because Soviet Russia was not willing to tie herself down to the League of Nations Covenant's procedure which permits of time wasting and subterfuges.

The contracting parties will consult together on ways and means by which the mutual assistance is to be rendered (General Staff talks).

The contracting parties pledge themselves to enter into consultation in the event of an impending act of aggression.

The interests of third States, which are to be rendered assistance in execution of a guarantee pledge, must be safeguarded. This paragraph has obviously been inserted in order to help allay the misgivings of Poland and Rumania.

The treaty is to continue in force, in the first instance, for five years.

As I learned further, the British Government only decided with the greatest reluctance to make further concessions after Soviet Russia had absolutely refused to consider the less far-reaching British proposals. The treaty is said only to apply to Europe and thus to include no guarantee of Soviet Russia's Far Eastern frontier. The British Government will only consider the idea of a Far Eastern guarantee if Japan

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 624, 625, 648 and 657.

enters into an alliance with the Axis Powers. Definite reports to hand in the Foreign Office here, claiming knowledge of German feelers in Moscow, have allegedly tipped the scales in favour of the new proposal. The British Government were afraid that Germany might succeed in keeping Soviet Russia neutral or even inducing her to adopt benevolent neutrality. That would have meant the complete collapse of the encirclement action.

It is said to be the Prime Minister's intention to make a solemn declaration at the signature of the treaty that the sole purpose of the treaty is to prevent aggression. He will add to this the declaration that Great Britain is prepared in all sincerity to negotiate for the removal of all legitimate grievances.<sup>2</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>2</sup> In a further telegram, No. 184 of June 1 (not printed, 1625/388803), Dirksen reported that the London press had that morning more or less precisely reproduced the substance of the British proposals and that, in particular, details given by the Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Daily Herald* corresponded substantially with what Dirksen had reported; he added that the press showed disappointment at Molotov's speech of May 31 (see document No. 463.)

## No. 459

F10/302-03; 320-24

*Count Ciano to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*<sup>1</sup>

No. 4013

ROME, May 31, 1939.

DEAR RIBBENTROP: The bearer of this letter is His Excellency Count Ugo Cavallero, General of Armoured Corps, Senator of the Realm, now Under Secretary of State for War, and until a few weeks ago Commander of the Armoured Forces in Italian East Africa. His Excellency Cavallero, in his capacity of Vice President, has been made director of the military and economic commissions which are being established, in accordance with the terms of the Pact of Friendship and Alliance.<sup>2</sup>

In introducing him to you I would ask you to be good enough to put His Excellency Cavallero in touch with the German personages who are being entrusted with the corresponding functions, and to be good enough to give him such information and particulars as may seem appropriate to put him fully in the picture over his task.

I have entrusted General Cavallero with a confidential document drawn up by the Duce, which is of particular importance for the development of military and economic collaboration between our two countries. The Duce wishes this document to be handed to the

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the Italian text in the German Foreign Ministry archives; see also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 426.

Führer,<sup>3</sup> and I would ask you to be kind enough to arrange for it to be transmitted to the exalted recipient.

I thank you in advance, my dear Ribbentrop, for your welcome to His Excellency Ugo Cavallero, and avail myself of the opportunity to send you my cordial greetings and the renewed assurance of my friendship.<sup>4</sup>

Yours,

CIANO

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum, St.S. No. 467 of June 2 (not printed, 2180/471697), Weizsäcker recorded that he had heard from the Italian Ambassador that General Cavallero had just arrived and wished to call on Ribbentrop to deliver a document from Mussolini to the Führer. This paper was sealed and neither Cavallero nor Attolico knew its contents. Cavallero intended to make contact with Weizsäcker, Keitel and, if possible, Ritter, and then return to Rome, whence he would only return when measures for organizing the work of the commissions had been settled. No concrete discussions were to take place during his present visit.

<sup>4</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "The enclosure to this is the Memorandum of 30.5. from Mussolini to the Führer."

[Enclosure]<sup>5</sup>

ROME, May 30.

Now that the Alliance between Italy and Germany has been concluded and will be fully applied at all times according to the letter and spirit of the Treaty, I deem it appropriate to set down my views on the present situation and the way it will probably develop in future.

### I

War between the plutocratic and therefore self-seeking conservative nations and the densely populated and poor nations is inevitable. In accordance with this situation appropriate preparations must be made.

### II

Through the strategic positions secured in Bohemia and Albania the Axis Powers have a fundamental factor for success in their hands.

### III

In a memorandum addressed to Herr von Ribbentrop<sup>6</sup> at the time of the meeting in Milan I set out the reasons why Italy requires a period of preparation, which may extend until the end of 1942.

The reasons are as follows:

"The two European Axis Powers require a period of peace of not less than three years. Only from 1943 onwards will an effort by war<sup>7</sup> have the greatest prospects of success.

<sup>5</sup> Translated from the German translation in the German Foreign Ministry archives where the Italian original has not been found; the Italian text is reproduced in *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 59.

<sup>6</sup> No trace has been found of this memorandum in the German Foreign Ministry archives. The passages quoted here appear in the memorandum drawn up by Mussolini for Ciano; see Editors' Note on p. 444.

<sup>7</sup> "eine kriegerische Anstrengung"; the Italian here reads: "uno sforzo bellico".

Italy needs a period of peace for the following reasons:

a) For the military organization of Libya and Albania, and also for the pacification of Ethiopia, from which latter region an army of half a million men must be formed.

b) To complete the construction and reconditioning of the six battleships, which has already commenced.

c) For the renewal of the whole of our medium and heavy calibre artillery.

d) For the further development of plans for autarky, by which any attempt at a blockade by the satiated democracies must be thwarted.

e) For carrying out the World Exhibition in 1942, which will not only document the twenty years' activity of the Fascist régime but could also bring in reserves of foreign exchange.

f) For effecting the return home of Italians from France, which constitutes a very serious military and moral problem.

g) For completing the transfer, already begun, of a large number of war industries from the plain of the Po to Southern Italy.

h) For further intensifying relations not only between the Governments of the Axis Powers but also between both peoples. For this purpose, a *détente* in the relations between the Roman Catholic Church and National Socialism would doubtless be useful, and is also greatly desired by the Vatican.

For all these reasons, Fascist Italy does not wish to hasten a European war, although she is convinced of the inevitability of such a war. It may also be assumed that within three years Japan will have brought her war in China to a conclusion."

It can furthermore be foreseen that in peacetime the London-Paris-Moscow triangle will try everything to damage the Axis Powers, especially in the economic and moral sphere. In the economic sphere this will be countered by the fact that plans for autarky are being developed to the utmost, and in the sphere of morale by proceeding to a counter-attack in every case.

#### IV

Apart from actual material sabotage, everything will be done to loosen the internal cohesion of the enemies, by fostering anti-semitic movements, supporting pacifist tendencies (case of Paul Faure in France),<sup>8</sup> promoting autonomist aspirations (Alsace, Brittany, Corsica, Ireland), accelerating moral disintegration and inciting the colonial peoples to revolt.

The entry of Bolshevik Russia into the Western world, with London leading her by the hand, is doubtless a favourable factor in the development of these plans.

<sup>8</sup> Paul Faure, Secretary General of the French Socialist Party, leader of that section of the Party which favoured a pacifist policy. He played a prominent part in the Congress of the French Socialist Party held on May 28-30, 1939.

## V

From the strategic point of view, the Western Powers should be regarded as "walled in", that is practically unattackable by land forces. Consequently, a reciprocal defence position should be provided for on the Rhine, in the Alps and in Libya. On the other hand, the metropolitan and colonial forces in Ethiopia can start aggressive operations against the neighbouring French and British colonies.

The war in the West would thus assume the character of a predominantly air and naval struggle. Italy's naval problem has been made considerably easier by the conquest of Albania. The Adriatic has become an inland sea which can be hermetically sealed.

## VI

The war can only assume a dynamic character towards the East and South East. Poland and other guaranteed States will have to depend on themselves and can be paralysed before any real assistance is rendered them even from neighbouring Russia.

## VII

The war for which the great democracies are preparing is a *war of attrition*. One must therefore proceed from the grimmest hypothesis, which is a hundred per cent probable. *The Axis will obtain nothing more from the rest of the world.* This prospect would be grave but the strategic positions secured by the Axis have considerably reduced the difficulty and danger of a war of attrition. To this end, the whole of the Danube and Balkan Basins [*sic*] must be seized in the first few hours of the war. We must not be satisfied with declarations of neutrality but must occupy the territories and exploit them for the provision of the necessary wartime food and industrial supplies. By this operation, which must be conducted with lightning speed and the utmost decision, not only would the "guaranteed States", like Greece, Rumania and Turkey, be put *hors de combat*, but we would also safeguard our rear. In this game—as in chess<sup>9</sup>—we can count on two favourable pawns: Hungary and Bulgaria.

## VIII

Italy can mobilize a comparatively larger number of men than Germany. This abundance of men is balanced by modest means. Italy will, therefore, under the war plan, supply more men than material and Germany more material than men.

I am desirous of knowing whether the above observations meet with the Führer's approval. If so, the plans of the General Staffs must be prepared on these lines.

M.

(Sgd.) MUSSOLINI

<sup>9</sup> These three words do not appear in the Italian text.



## No. 460

472/228558

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*

PERSONAL

BERLIN, May 31, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: The question whether and by what means one could still try to put a spoke into the Anglo-Russian conversations has been going to and fro during recent days. The outcome is to be found in the enclosed memorandum.<sup>1</sup>

Attolico has not been given any details of the matter so far. He has of course had some knowledge of the discussions ever since Munich<sup>2</sup> and has also been in contact with Rome by telephone. Anyhow, he is not yet acquainted with the final result, now reached, in our deliberations. I believe however that it will meet with Italy's approval.

The purpose of this letter is merely to put you personally in the picture. No decision has yet been taken here on informing our Heads of Missions about this development.

Kind regards and Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> As appears from the following marginal note: "i.a. A. D. No. 455 [in the files of memoranda by the State Secretary concerning visits from diplomats, No. 455]", this was a copy of the memorandum, St.S. No. 455, printed as document No. 451. On the same day Weizsäcker sent Moltke the following letter (259/169540): "Dear Moltke: In the days before Whitsun and during the holidays, deliberations on whether and by what means one could still try to put a spoke into the Anglo-Russian conversations have been going to and fro. The latest result is a conversation which I had yesterday with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires here. It has not yet been decided how much of the substance of the conversation will be imparted to our Heads of Missions. I feel it to be my duty, however, not to lose the good opportunity afforded by a special courier to Warsaw, of sending you a copy of the record of the conversation in order to keep you personally informed."

<sup>2</sup> Presumably a reference to Schulenburg's visit to Munich; see document No. 325, footnote 4.

## No. 461

2871/568494-96/98

*Treaty of Non-Aggression*

The German Chancellor  
and

His Majesty the King of Denmark and Iceland,  
being firmly resolved to preserve peace under all circumstances between Germany and Denmark, have agreed to confirm this resolve by means of a Treaty and have nominated as their plenipotentiaries:

For the German Chancellor:

The Foreign Minister,

Herr Joachim von Ribbentrop,

For His Majesty the King of Denmark and Iceland:  
The Ambassador Extraordinary and Minister  
Plenipotentiary in Berlin,

Monsieur Herluf Zahle, Royal Chamberlain,  
who, having exchanged their Full Powers, found to be in good and due  
form, have agreed on the following terms:

Article 1

The German Reich and the Kingdom of Denmark will in no circumstances resort to war or to the use of force in any other form against one another.

Should action of the kind specified in paragraph (1) be taken by a third Power against one of the Contracting Parties, the other Contracting Party shall in no way support such action.

Article 2

The Treaty shall be ratified and the instruments of ratification exchanged in Berlin<sup>1</sup> as soon as possible.

The Treaty shall come into force with the exchange of instruments of ratification and shall thenceforth be valid for a period of ten years. Should the Treaty not be denounced by one of the Contracting Parties at least one year before the expiry of this period, its validity shall be prolonged for a further ten years.

The same shall hold good for the subsequent periods.

In witness whereof the Plenipotentiaries of both Parties have signed this Treaty.

Done in duplicate, in the German and Danish languages, each copy being equally authentic, at  
BERLIN on May 31, 1939.

JOACHIM V. RIBBENTROP

HERLUF ZAHLE

*Protocol of Signature*

At today's signature of the German-Danish Treaty, agreement has been reached by both Parties on the following point:

Support given by the Contracting Party not involved in the conflict does not come within the meaning of Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Treaty, if and so long as the conduct of this Party is in accord with the general rules of neutrality.

If the normal exchange and transit of goods continues between the Contracting Party not involved in the conflict and the Third Power, it will therefore not be considered as inadmissible support.

BERLIN, May 31, 1939.

JOACHIM V. RIBBENTROP

HERLUF ZAHLE

<sup>1</sup> Ratifications were exchanged in Berlin on June 24, 1939. See *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 856-858.

## No. 462

174/135958

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Tokyo, June 1, 1939—2:34 p.m.

SECRET

Received June 1—10 a.m.

No. 229 of June 1

For the State Secretary.

With reference to your telegram No. 175 of May 29<sup>1</sup> (Pol. I M. . . .g). Wenneker's<sup>2</sup> early arrival is desirable, but his immediate despatch is not of decisive advantage for the negotiations. The sphere of influence of every Naval Attaché is limited, their . . . (group mutilated) to middle-ranking officers, who are in any case increasingly inclining to take our side. Within the limits set for me, I have continuously put the Naval Attaché<sup>3</sup> on to these officers and have caused the Italian Ambassador<sup>4</sup> to do the same. Captain Kojima,<sup>5</sup> who has just arrived, has also offered his services. I shall get Admiral Foerster,<sup>6</sup> who is remaining behind on today's departure of the Press Delegation, to use his influence on the Naval Command to undermine their assessment of the Anglo-American fleet. Invitations during the next few days will offer an opportunity for this. Foerster, as a former Commander-in-Chief, is held in high esteem. The Navy's objections to immediate entry into war against the Western Powers are, however, only based in part on naval problems on a technical and operational level; important factors are fears of America in the economic field which dominate Japan to a great extent, and the strong influence of the Anglophile Court circles on the Naval Command. The Naval Command, despite the present tension, harp on the tensions [*sic*]<sup>7</sup> of the twenty-year-old Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which has enabled Japan to become a Great Power. Since territorial agreements played a considerable part in the complex and long drawn out negotiations for the conclusion of this Alliance, I would draw attention to the possibility of making tactical

<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> Vice-Admiral Paul Werner Wenneker, who had been Naval Attaché in Tokyo, 1933-1937.<sup>3</sup> Captain Lietzmann.<sup>4</sup> Giacinto Auriti.<sup>5</sup> Japanese Naval Attaché in Berlin 1937-1939, who had just been succeeded by Rear-Admiral Endo.<sup>6</sup> Admiral Richard Foerster, Commander-in-Chief of the German Fleet 1934-1936, retired 1936. In telegram No. 180 of June 3 (not printed, 174/135958), Weizsäcker replied stressing the importance of Admiral Foerster's prolonging his stay, in a private capacity, as long as his influence with Japanese naval circles could be useful in the current negotiations, and asking that some plausible grounds for such extension be found.<sup>7</sup> "Spannungen"; this word is marked as doubtful in deciphering.

use of the South Sea Mandates,<sup>8</sup> particularly towards the Navy. The question has not been broached by me or by the Japanese, but I have reason to believe that it is at present being exploited by British propaganda to our disadvantage.

OTT

<sup>8</sup> A League of Nations Mandate for the administration of the Marianas, Caroline and Marshall Islands, former German possessions, was assigned to Japan in 1920.

## No. 463

1625/388904-06

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Moscow, June 1, 1939—9:45 p.m.

No. 84 of June 1

Received June 2—5 p.m.

Pol. II 1893.

A translation of Molotov's speech<sup>1</sup> leaves today by the Italian courier.

Molotov reproaches the democratic States for underrating the significance of the deterioration in the international situation and for working for the "pacification" of public opinion with the hope, clearly held in some circles, of diverting aggression in the desired direction (that is: against the Soviet Union). The Soviet Union could not be suspected of any sympathy with aggressors, her interests lay with the non-aggressive States and yet her attitude differed from that of both the aggressive as well as the democratic States. The Soviet Government's mistrust of the attitude of the democratic countries repeatedly finds expression in the speech. Molotov quotes Stalin's well known words that the Soviet Union must not allow herself to be drawn into conflicts by the warmongers.<sup>2</sup>

For the negotiations with Britain and France, Molotov stipulates the following conditions as the minimum:

- 1) The conclusion, between the Soviet Union, Britain and France, of effective pacts of mutual assistance of an exclusively defensive character;
- 2) Guarantee of the Central and Eastern European States including all European States bordering on the Soviet Union;
- 3) The conclusion of a concrete agreement between the three States on the form and scope of immediate and effective aid.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7891/E571314 and 2767/535889-903). The speech was made on May 31, before the Third Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 689 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 77, 80 and 86.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Point 2 of the principles of the Communist Party's Foreign Policy enunciated by Stalin in his speech to the 18th Party Congress on March 10, 1939. See document No. 1.

The Soviet Union was not forcing these conditions on anyone but would not depart from them.

The latest Anglo-French proposals<sup>3</sup> admittedly represented a step forward but, because of their numerous clauses, this might prove to be a fictitious one. Molotov criticized the proposals because they refer to certain articles of the League of Nations Covenant, but most of all because they do not include three of the Soviet Union's North Western neighbours in the guarantees and assistance to be rendered. (There is general uncertainty here as to whether Molotov meant Lithuania or Finland besides Latvia and Estonia.)

On the subject of the German-Italian Alliance, Molotov remarked that the recent *rapprochement* between Germany and Italy had been camouflaged under the alleged necessity for the joint struggle against Communism. Now the aggressors no longer played at hide and seek. The military Alliance makes no mention of the struggle against the Comintern. On the contrary, both German and Italian statesmen, as well as the press, expressly declared that the Treaty was directly aimed at the most important democratic States of Europe.

In spite of the negotiations in progress with Britain and France, the Soviet Union was not forgoing relations on a practical footing with Germany and Italy. After outlining the course of the German-Soviet negotiations on the 200 million credit, Molotov used these words: "At the beginning of 1939 the Commissariat for Foreign Trade was notified that a special German representative, Schnurre, was coming to Moscow for negotiations. Then, instead of Schnurre, the German Ambassador Count Schulenburg was entrusted with these negotiations, which were interrupted, owing to differences of opinion.<sup>4</sup> Judging by a few pointers, it is not out of the question that these negotiations can be resumed."

On the Aaland question, Molotov repeated the thesis already advanced in the Soviet press,<sup>5</sup> adding that, in the light of international events, the Aaland question had recently assumed a particularly serious significance for the Soviet Union, and that he assumed Finland would take into account the negative attitude of the Council of the League of Nations.

Referring to the latest serious incidents on the Manchurian-Mongolian frontier,<sup>6</sup> Molotov stated sharply that the Soviet Government would defend the frontier of the Mongolian People's Republic under the

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 458.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, chapter vi, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 440.

<sup>6</sup> In a report, No. A/1118 of June 1 (not printed, 7995/E575622), Schulenburg stated that, according to information from the Japanese Embassy, incidents had occurred on May 11, 14 and 28, and that Molotov had had two conversations with the Japanese Ambassador on the subject. See also document No. 478 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 85.

Assistance Pact<sup>7</sup> just as determinedly as their own frontier. Molotov added that "all patience had its limits". It can be inferred from Molotov's speech that, in spite of deep mistrust, the Soviet Union is still prepared to conclude a treaty with Britain and France though only on condition that all its demands are accepted. Diplomatic circles here, who until recently were convinced of an early and successful conclusion to the Anglo-Soviet negotiations, are now, after Molotov's speech, considerably more sceptical about the prospects of an early conclusion and regard the Soviet demands for the inclusion of the three North Western neighbours in the guarantee as an obstacle not easily removed. It struck everyone that neither the British Ambassador nor the French Chargé d'Affaires were present at Molotov's speech at which nearly all Heads of Missions appeared. In spite of his categorical rejection of the policy of so-called aggressor States, Molotov avoided sallies against Germany, and showed readiness to continue the talks begun in Berlin and Moscow. It is worth noting in this connection that Mikoyan will receive Hilger on June 2.<sup>8</sup>

SCHULENBURG

<sup>7</sup> The Agreement between the Mongolian People's Government and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic regarding the Establishment of Friendly Relations, signed at Moscow, November 5, 1921. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 132, pp. 854-857.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 465.

## No. 464

97/108360-61

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 1, 1939.

St.S. No. 463

The High Commissioner in Danzig, Professor Burckhardt, after his conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> said to me today that he was prepared, although rather reluctantly, to spend the summer months in Danzig. He believes that his presence will at least contribute a certain element of calm. He also realizes that his departure would leave a gap and that the question of filling it might give rise to a discussion which at this particular moment might not be very opportune. Professor Burckhardt earnestly hopes, however, that during these months special measures in Danzig will not force him into decisions which might perhaps be interpreted as anti-German.

From his last conversations with the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck,

<sup>1</sup> On June 1. No memorandum on this conversation has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives, but see document No. 492. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 82 and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 696 and vol. vi, No. 36 and Appendix II.

it may be mentioned that Beck had described as a possibility the resumption of Polish-German talks on a broader basis after a calmer atmosphere had set in.<sup>2</sup>

From his conversations with Lord Halifax<sup>3</sup> and others, Professor Burckhardt has gathered that, in the event of a German-Polish conflict, Great Britain would not go back on the guarantee she had given to Poland. At the same time, however, Professor Burckhardt reported that he had heard direct from the British Ambassador in Warsaw, Kennard, that at British instance a Commission of the Polish Ministry of the Interior was touring the Polish Western frontier to ensure that matters connected with the German national community were set in order.<sup>4</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister for his part has explained to Professor Burckhardt how disastrous intervention in a German-Polish conflict might prove for the British Empire.<sup>5</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See also *ibid.*, vol. v, No. 656.

<sup>3</sup> At Geneva, on May 21. See also *ibid.*, vol. v, No. 580.

<sup>4</sup> See also *ibid.*, vol. v, No. 563.

<sup>5</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "To the Under State Secretary, and the Deputy Director of the Political Department. (I suggest that the Consulate General at Danzig, and the Embassies at Warsaw, London and Rome, be informed in strict confidence.)"

## No. 465

103/111392

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

Moscow, June 2, 1939—8:05 p.m.

No. 86 of June 2

Received June 2—10:30 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 102 of May 30.<sup>1</sup>

During today's conversation with Mikoyan, Hilger kept within the limits laid down in your instructions. He stated that we had the impression that doubts had arisen in the minds of the Soviet Government as to the sincerity of our intentions about extending economic relations and that he had come to prove the contrary, and to dispel any misunderstandings by giving factual data on the actual course of the February negotiations.<sup>2</sup> Over and above this he was, as a result of his work in Berlin, in a position to state that the possibilities for German exports to the Soviet Union had meanwhile improved.

Mikoyan replied that by our procrastination at that time over the negotiations and our failure to give a definite answer, he "had been

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 453.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 486-195.

placed in a very awkward position *vis-à-vis* his Government" and consequently had lost all interest in these negotiations.

When in the further course of the conversation Mikoyan asked what *modus procedendi* we were now proposing, Hilger replied that the purpose of his visit was merely to clear up doubt which apparently existed.

In reply to Mikoyan's question whether Hilger was "convinced" that any economic negotiations would lead to a positive result, Hilger answered that this might be hoped, depending on the attitude of the Soviet Government.

The interview closed with a statement by Mikoyan that he would think over the information given to him and that he reserved his reply.<sup>3</sup>

SCHULENBURG

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<sup>3</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 107.

## No. 466

174/185957

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 179

BERLIN, June 2, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador

With reference to your telegram No. 229.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to fear of America in the economic field which you mention and which is often employed in political arguments, the Reich Foreign Minister suggests you use the following counter arguments: As long as Japan was not involved in war with America alleged economic threats meant nothing. Experience had shown that in time of peace, trade conducted by private enterprise always sought and found a way, even if a roundabout one, of getting its products to the customer in return for good money.

For the Japanese Government to adopt a timid attitude would not promote this trade, on the contrary it would only be apt to do it harm. The firmer the political line the Japanese Government adopted, the more surely would their trade interests be safeguarded.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 462.



## No. 467

174/135959

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Tokyo, June 3, 1939—2:15 p.m.

SECRET

Received June 3—10:05 a.m.

No. 232 of June 3

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 229 of June 1.<sup>1</sup>

General Machijiri has just caused me to be informed that yesterday the Navy at last accepted the Army's proposal on the alliance question. When questioned, my confidant refrained from giving any details but intimated that the vital point, namely automatic entry into war against the Western Powers, had been conceded in principle. The Army and the Navy would now jointly press the Foreign Minister for a new version of the instructions to Oshima, which they were expecting in a few days. General Machijiri left it to me as to whether to inform Berlin unofficially. I am trying to check with the Navy as to whether this information is correct. If it is, agreement between the Army and the Navy is decisive for the alliance.<sup>2</sup>

OTT

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 462.<sup>2</sup> In a further telegram, (No. 235 of June 5, not printed, 174/135962), Ott reported that the Vice Minister of War had confirmed to him that the Army and Navy had reached agreement but that the Army had not entirely prevailed. His confidant in the Foreign Ministry had informed him that this agreement had been approved by the Minister President and Foreign Minister, and was about to be transmitted to Berlin. Participation in a war against Britain and France was accepted but still with certain reservations, whereby Japan desired to secure the most favourable moment for entry into war. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 110 and 111.

## No. 468

1625/338810

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 187 of June 3

LONDON, June 3, 1939.

Received June 4—10:5 a.m.

Pol. II 1913.

With reference to my telegram No. 184 of June 1.<sup>1</sup>

Indignation about Russia's attitude to British desires for a pact is beginning to spread beyond right-wing Conservative circles. Even

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 458, footnote 2.

circles close to the Labour Party show disappointment at Molotov's speech<sup>2</sup> and express concern lest the Russians' stubbornness may place the conclusion of the treaty of alliance in doubt. In City circles doubts as to the expediency of further negotiations are also making themselves felt.

Furthermore, expression is being given to the increasing realization on the part of public opinion that the Soviet Union's demand for a "guarantee" of the States bordering on her amounts in reality to no more and no less than that, in the event of "German aggression" against these border States, Britain should sanction their occupation—even against their will—by Russian troops.

Official circles share the general disappointment, but try to belittle the difficulties, in order to justify the optimism so far shown.

VON DIRKSEN

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<sup>2</sup> On May 31; see document No. 463.

## No. 469

116/66602

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 470

BERLIN, June 3, 1939.

The Estonian Minister, who is known to be an expert on Russia,<sup>1</sup> told me yesterday that in Moscow the mistrust towards the democratic States was undoubtedly greater than that towards the totalitarian. M. Tofer said that he had also gathered from conversations with the Russian Chargé d'Affaires here that in Russia they were only waiting for a friendly gesture towards Moscow to be made in public before giving expression to the above-mentioned sentiments.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> He had been Minister in the Soviet Union from 1933 to 1936.

<sup>2</sup> This document is initialled in the margin "R[ibbentrop]".

## No. 470

8049/B578669-70

### *The President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig<sup>1</sup>*

[DANZIG], June 3, 1939.

Pol. V 5081.

MR. MINISTER: I remain, up to the present, without reply to my

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of this Note was transmitted to the Foreign Ministry under cover of a report by Janson, No. 930 I of June 5 (not printed, 8049/578667-68). In the special file opened by the Foreign Ministry on the Kalthof incident (8049/578586-672) the Note here printed

communications of May 16<sup>2</sup> concerning the frontier incident on the Liessau-Tczew Bridge and of May 24<sup>3</sup> concerning frontier incidents at Liessau and at Kohling as well as further cases of frontier trespassing and flying across the Danzig border. Equally I have, up to the present, received no satisfactory answer to my communications addressed to you on May 21<sup>4</sup> and 24<sup>5</sup> regarding the murder of the Danzig butcher, Max Grünau.

The facts of the murder of the butcher, Max Grünau, have been established beyond doubt by police investigation. The conduct of the three Polish officials, Counsellor Perkowski, Dr. Sziller and Customs Inspector Swida I must refuse to discuss further, to avoid an unprofitable exchange of Notes.

I had expected that the Polish Government would at least produce an expression of regret in the case of Grünau and for the conduct of their three officials. I have further expressed my expectation that the Government of the Republic of Poland would recall from their posts the three compromised officials.

I have the honour to inform you that I still entertain these expectations. As I cannot ask my offices and officials to have anything further to do either officially or socially with the said Polish gentlemen, I have ordered all officials directly and indirectly serving under the Senate to break off official and private connections with M. Perkowski, Dr. Sziller and M. Swida.

Accept, Mr. Minister, the expression of my highest esteem,

GREISER

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8444/E594310-14).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8444/E594321-27).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed; see document No. 416, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 1 above.

## No. 471

7693/E548422; 24

### *The President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig*

[DANZIG], June 3, 1939.  
Pol. V 5082.

MR. MINISTER : Months ago I already had the honour of drawing your

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is the last of a number of Notes exchanged between Greiser and Chodacki, reiterating their conflicting versions and demands. In his Note of May 24 (not printed, 8049/578633-34) Greiser had demanded the recall of the three Polish officials involved in the Kalthof incident, a demand rejected by Chodacki in his Note of May 27 (not printed, 8049/578664-66), where he stated that the Polish Government could not admit that the Danzig Senate were entitled to make such demands. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 679 and 707; the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 131 and 133, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 37, 95 and 173.

attention to the fact that the ever-increasing number of Polish Customs Inspectors was no longer compatible with the execution of their duties as prescribed by treaty.<sup>1</sup> Since the latest addition, there are now well over 100 Polish Customs Inspectors functioning in Danzig territory. Their behaviour, both in their official and private life, gives rise to increasing complaints. The Danzig population, as well as the German population, in their local frontier intercourse feel themselves constantly offended by the way in which the Polish Customs officials perform their duty and by their behaviour in private life.

I have no fear that incidents on the part of the population might arise on that account. Still less is the safety of the Polish officials in any way endangered. I have taken steps to ensure that they may, as hitherto, perform their duties absolutely safely and without hindrance. I believe, however, that ways and means must be found to eliminate the constant friction and tension.

For all these reasons I consider it necessary forthwith to restrict the activity of the Polish Customs Inspectors to a general supervision in conformity with the treaty principles. In particular I must insist that their official activities be confined to their offices, that is to say, not performed outside their office buildings. Nor can I any longer permit the Danzig Customs officials to take instructions, even in the form of suggestions, from the Polish Customs officials. I will, however, see that questions officially put are answered officially.

I have directed the President of the Customs Administration of the Free City of Danzig to instruct his officials accordingly. I have the honour, Mr. Minister, to request you to inform your Government accordingly and to exert your influence towards meeting the wishes of the Danzig Government. I avail myself of this opportunity to revert to our conversation of February 8<sup>2</sup> last. At that time I explained to you, Mr. Minister, that I would give instructions to abstain for the present from swearing in the Customs officials and that, should occasion arise, I would communicate with you before administering the oath.

I have the honour to inform you, with reference to what was contained in my letter of January 3 last (pages 2 and 3),<sup>3</sup> that I have now

<sup>1</sup> Under the Conventions of Paris (1920) and of Warsaw (1921), entered into by Danzig and Poland in accordance with Article 104 of the Treaty of Versailles and the Polish-Danzig Agreements of Aug. 6, 1934; see document No. 765.

<sup>2</sup> In a minute dated Feb. 8 on this conversation (not printed, 8471/E596098-101), Greiser noted that Chodacki had raised with him the question of issuing a decree exempting Customs officials and Polish teachers from the provisions of the Danzig Civil Service Law requiring an oath of loyalty to the National Socialist leadership of the Danzig Free State, and had also raised a number of minor points concerning, *inter alia*, the position of Polish unemployed and the schools' question.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7032/E522617/2-4). This letter replied to objections raised by Chodacki to the Danzig Civil Service Law; the passage here referred to related specifically to the position of Danzig Customs officials, arguing that they, like other Danzig officials, were responsible only to the Government of the Free City.

left it to the discretion of the Finance Department of the Senate to administer the oath to the Customs officials if they regard it as desirable.<sup>4</sup>

I avail myself, etc.,

GREISER

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<sup>4</sup> A copy of this Note was forwarded to the Foreign Ministry with Janson's report No. 930 II of June 5 (not printed, 7693/E548420-21). On June 7, the Foreign Ministry sent a copy (7693/E548426) to the Embassy in Warsaw, and, on June 12, copies (7693/E548427) were circulated to the Missions in London, Paris, Rome, Stockholm and Geneva, as well as to the Ministries of the Interior, Finance, and Propaganda and to the Reichsführer-SS. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 6; the *French Yellow Book*, No. 133; and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 173.

## No. 472

1593/384291-92

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 471

BERLIN, June 5, 1939.  
Pol. VII 937.

The Turkish Ambassador called on me this morning. First he spoke briefly about the disturbed atmosphere in Turco-German relations, brought about by statements in the press, and then he came to the question of the delivery of the consignments of war material which were due (guns from the Skoda Works and torpedoes from the Deutsche Werke, Kiel). On this the Ambassador handed me the attached *note verbale*,<sup>1</sup> which draws attention to a previous Note of May 27<sup>2</sup> on the same subject. The Ambassador added that it was obviously a question of misunderstandings on the part of minor authorities. If not, one should say so honestly. The orders had, indeed, already been paid for by Turkey. Legally the case was indisputably against us.

I promised the Ambassador to take the matter up but did not let him know whether and how much I knew about it. On the other hand, I asked the Ambassador whether a report, which had reached me by chance, that Turkey had placed an embargo on the export of chrome to Germany, was really true. The Ambassador feigned ignorance of this just as I had done over the deliveries of war materials. I then passed on to challenge the Ambassador's remark that the press here had disturbed the atmosphere between the two countries, and reminded him of Numan vowing that Turkey would never join any combination directed against Germany.<sup>3</sup>

The Ambassador thereupon expatiated at some length on the Italian Government's new "living space" theory, and put forward

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed; see document No. 454, footnote 6.

<sup>3</sup> See also documents Nos. 59, 134 and 151.

familiar arguments (Italian troop concentrations in the Dodecanese, excessive military occupation of Albania, unreliability of Italian official pronouncements, etc.). Then the Ambassador sought once more to differentiate between Turco-Italian and Turco-German relations. I replied that anyone who had dealings with Italy would also have to deal with us. The Turkish Government must go to Rome for an explanation of Italian policy. I would, however, advise the Ambassador to believe his colleague, Attolico, who, as M. Arpag had told me, had spoken reassuringly to him. The very nature of things did indeed prove that Turkey need not be afraid of Italy.

For the rest, I urged the Ambassador really not to be taken in by all the wild rumours that circulated in the Diplomatic Corps in Berlin.

As he was leaving, the Ambassador told me we need not worry since Turkish self-reliance was a guarantee against Anglo-Turkish ties becoming too close, at least not so close that Turkey would be allowing herself to be degraded into becoming a tool of British policy. Apparently the Ambassador himself believed that there was still some latitude for manoeuvre in the negotiations between Ankara and London.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 473

1625/388822

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 189 of June 5

LONDON, June 5, 1939—2:12 p.m.

Received June 5—4:15 p.m.

Pol. II 1940.

The Soviet Note, which arrived here on Saturday,<sup>1</sup> in answer to the British proposal reported in my telegram No. 183 of May 31,<sup>2</sup> contains, in considerably more conciliatory form, the objections formulated by Molotov in his speech last Thursday.<sup>3</sup> The main objections of the Soviet Government continue to lie in the undefined position of the States bordering on their territory. The Soviet Government refuse to recognize any special arrangement for these border States, but rather would like to force a British guarantee on them in order thus to be protected by an uninterrupted system of guaranteed surrounding States.

On this, I understand that increasing opposition to such a demand is manifesting itself in the Foreign Office. Experts are said to have proposed circumventing the existing difficulties by Britain and France giving the Soviet Russians the same assurance as given to the Poles.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., June 3. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 697.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 458.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 463.

This would mean that Soviet Russia could declare German aggression against the Baltic States to be "a threat to her independence" in the same way as could Poland in the event of an attack on Danzig. In this way Soviet Russia would automatically be assured of the help of the two Western Powers in the event of a German attack on her border States without these border States having to be specifically mentioned in the treaty. This suggestion has met with little response in the Foreign Office because it would concede to Soviet Russia a freedom of action going even further than that conceded to the Poles. In this connection, it must be borne in mind that—as already reported in telegram No. 99 of March 29<sup>4</sup>—the idea of the term aggression includes the *threat* of attack as well as the direct attack itself.

The optimistic view of the prospects for the conclusion of a treaty expressed in yesterday and today's press does not—so far as can be seen as yet—find support in the views of authoritative British circles.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 121.

## No. 474

F13/375-79

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM No. 33

BERLIN, June 7, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

RECORD OF THE RECEPTION OF PRINCE REGENT PAUL BY THE FÜHRER IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE YUGOSLAV FOREIGN MINISTER, CINCAR-MARKOVIĆ, ON THE AFTER-NOON OF JUNE 5, 1939

The Führer told Prince Regent Paul that he was trying to pursue a policy of close friendship towards Yugoslavia, in the economic as well as political sphere.

Prince Regent Paul said that he too was inspired by a similar desire towards Germany.

The Führer then said that, by the Rome-Berlin Axis, Germany was bound to Italy in an alliance for life and death. He identified Italy's interests with our own. It now appeared of importance to the Italian Government that Yugoslavia should make some gesture to demonstrate unmistakably her policy of friendship towards the Axis.<sup>2</sup>

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop said, on this point, that such a gesture could consist in withdrawal from the League of Nations. Further, close consultation between the Yugoslav and German Foreign Ministers on the further development of the Balkan Pact was required.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 431.

Turkey's falling out of step necessitated such a definition of attitude, as the Reich Foreign Minister had already told M. Cincar-Marković in a previous conversation.<sup>3</sup>

Prince Regent Paul said that Yugoslavia had already considerably dissociated herself from the League of Nations, and he was not altogether disinclined to withdraw at the proper moment.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop said, in the course of an ensuing conversation with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister,<sup>4</sup> that he suggested that Yugoslavia should even withdraw during the month of June. To this M. Cincar-Marković said that withdrawal before September 1 seemed to him difficult. The Yugoslavs would, however, again reflect upon the question and consider a withdrawal at as early a date as possible.

About the development of the Balkan Pact, Foreign Minister Cincar-Marković went on to say that the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Gafencu, would insist on the elimination of paragraph 6 of the Turco-British Agreement<sup>5</sup> at his forthcoming visit to Ankara. He had agreed with him that in Ankara Gafencu would oppose making the Anglo-Turkish convention too close.

Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop expressed doubts as to whether it would be possible to bring Turkey back to a really neutral attitude.

M. Cincar-Marković stated in reply that Yugoslavia would have to insist on the Balkan Pact being maintained on a neutral basis, otherwise Turkey would have to be asked to withdraw.

The Führer then emphasized once more how important it was for Yugoslavia to define her policy towards the Axis beyond doubt. It seemed to him that there were, above all, two main grounds for this:

1) Such a definition of attitude would consolidate Yugoslavia's internal position at a stroke. As soon as it became known that the Axis Powers were a hundred per cent in support of maintaining Yugoslavia in her present form, and advocated the maintenance of the *status quo*, Croat and Slovene separatists would cease their efforts of their own accord, as they would then have to realize that all hopes of help from without were futile.

2) Italy could have no interest in supporting Greater Hungarian tendencies. A new Greater Hungary would probably revive the old Hapsburg aspirations to the Adriatic in a new form. Italy's interests were therefore directed towards a strong Yugoslavia. But Italy must have a guarantee that such a strong Yugoslavia would always pursue

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 262.

<sup>4</sup> A pencilled line alongside the next four paragraphs indicates that they formed part of a subsidiary conversation between Ribbentrop and Cincar-Marković.

<sup>5</sup> Paragraph 6 of the Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12 reads: "The two Governments recognize that it is also necessary to ensure the establishment of security in the Balkans and they are consulting together with the object of achieving that purpose as speedily as possible."



a policy of friendship towards Italy. If there were no such certainty, it was impossible to predict what impulsive step the Duce might not one day take. It was also understandable that, in view of the hostility of France and Britain, Italy needed to know definitely whether her neighbours were to be regarded as friends or foes.

Prince Regent Paul said that he had already for years pursued a definite policy of friendship towards both Germany and Italy, although the Western Democracies had sometimes made this difficult for him. He would continue this course in any event.

The Führer then made a few remarks on the general world situation and the favourable position of the Axis Powers. He also mentioned the numerous offers which he had, in his time, made to Britain but which had always been sabotaged by the British.

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In a conversation which Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop had with the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, he told him that, at present, Turkish policy was pursuing an incomprehensible course. If Turkey allied herself permanently with the encirclement Powers, the Balkan Pact would become an absolutely impossible combination. In such circumstances, the separation of Yugoslavia from Turkey would sooner or later be inevitable. It was in Yugoslavia's interests to demonstrate her policy towards the Axis clearly now by withdrawing from the League of Nations.

The Yugoslav Foreign Minister said that he would study the question thoroughly. M. Cincar-Marković did not think that he could at present promise Yugoslavia's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact, as in Yugoslavia this Pact was regarded as directed against Russia. In Yugoslavia there had long been sentimental Slav ties with the old Russia. At present, therefore, the Pact was not popular.

When the Yugoslav Foreign Minister asked whether Germany was prepared to grant the 200 million credit, the Reich Foreign Minister said that he would support a favourable settlement.<sup>6</sup>

The Reich Foreign Minister then brought up the subject of the treatment of the German minorities in Slovenia. M. Cincar-Marković promised to investigate the matter. He, for his part, brought up complaints about certain movements among the Germans in Slovenia and mentioned the allegedly unfortunate influence exercised by the new German Consul in Maribor.<sup>7</sup> In conclusion the Reich Foreign Minister

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<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 279.

<sup>7</sup> Konsulatssekretär Stechele, Head of the Consular Sub-Office at Maribor. In a despatch of June 14 from Belgrade (not printed, 3041/600687-88), Heeren reported that Cincar-Marković had said that Stechele's previous activities in Eger, and the unrest that had started in the Maribor district area soon after his arrival there, had caused him to be regarded with the gravest mistrust by the Slovene authorities; Cincar-Marković requested his removal, which Heeren supported. A note by the Personnel Department, dated Aug. 12 (not printed, 3041/600686), states that Stechele was transferred to Varna.

spoke of the excellent strategic position in which the Axis Powers were placed. They did not want a conflict, but if it were forced upon them they were ready to fight at any time, no matter whether such a conflict lasted three months or ten years.<sup>8</sup>

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>8</sup> In a circular telegram of June 9 to Missions (230/151957) Weizsäcker gave a brief summary of this conversation, adding that no agreements had been concluded.

## No. 475

1625/388822-30

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 181 of June 5

ANKARA, June 5, 1939—8:30 p.m.

Received June 6—2 a.m.

Pol. II 1955.

In today's one and a half hour argument with the Foreign Minister I expressed, according to instructions,<sup>1</sup> the Reich Government's profound surprise at the political course taken here and pointed out the great dangers which had arisen thereby both for our mutual relations and for Turkey's existence. I reminded him in particular of the assurances previously given by Mussolini to the Führer and the Reich Foreign Minister and recently repeated by Ciano,<sup>2</sup> that Italy entertained no hostile intentions whatsoever, and that it was all the more absurd to talk of such, in view of Italian expansion having found its outlet towards Africa. Saracoğlu replied that no one doubted Germany's conviction that Italy would refrain from any hostile action, but Imperial Germany, which had been on equally friendly terms with the Young Turks, had also actually been unable to prevent Bosnia being taken by one of her treaty partners and Tripoli by the other.<sup>3</sup>

I then pointed out the grave responsibility that Turkey had assumed since associating herself with the policy of the encirclement Powers, and by which she would automatically be drawn into any conflict, and asked whether perhaps the Foreign Minister believed that these responsibilities were counterbalanced by an equivalent opportunity to exert influence on the warmongering Western Powers. We were under the impression that this so-called peace front was being built up by Britain in order, if possible, one day to delete Germany again from the map of Europe. It would then be too late and superfluous to ask who

<sup>1</sup> No record has been found, but these instructions would appear to have been given to Papen in Berlin at the end of May; see documents Nos. 435 and 454. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 67, 108, and 133.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 317.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., by Austria-Hungary in 1908, and by Italy in 1911.

was the aggressor. Turkey would have to fight for Anglo-Russian interests and the end of the story would be that Britain or Russia would be installed on the Straits. No one here seemed fully able to realize that in such a conflict, forced on us by Britain, the military strength of the Axis Powers, indissolubly welded together by the new Pact, would bring surprises which I, as an old friend of Turkey's, would like to spare her. In this connection, I also mentioned the unprecedented American warmongering of which Bullitt and Kennedy<sup>4</sup> were spokesmen. Turkey was letting herself be misused and could not expect the old friendship to be maintained, if it were not possible to insert in the Anglo-Turkish pact safeguards which would allow her to act in accordance with her real interests in the Bosphorus.

Our attitude was clear: we were waiting for the final pact in order to be able to remodel our policy according to the extent of the pact. Until then everything would remain substantially as before. The Foreign Minister, whom my views on the British "peace-front" seemed greatly to surprise, replied that he fully realized the gravity of the situation. He then asked me about the Skoda guns and torpedoes being withheld.<sup>5</sup> I said that I was not familiar with the details, but I believed that difficulties about despatching the torpedoes had been removed in the meantime. He felt obliged to tell me that if we did not deliver, then Turkey would also have to reduce her deliveries of raw materials and suspend payments. This remark was aimed at the chrome supplies, which alone would enable us to produce guns. From what he said, I gathered, however, that he was greatly concerned about a complete reorientation of our attitude. He understood very well that in the meantime everything was remaining *in suspenso* and assured me that he would take no sort of measures against us either. He had also instructed the Minister of the Interior<sup>6</sup> to suppress any unseemly press polemics.

I asked him to arrange an audience for me with İnönü<sup>7</sup> soon, as I was instructed to convey to him the Führer's grave anxiety. The conversation which I had with General Ali<sup>8</sup> confirmed my impression of strong opposition in military circles, which proves that the policy of wait-and-see which we are following is right.

PAPEN

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<sup>4</sup> U.S. Ambassadors in France and Great Britain respectively.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 472.

<sup>6</sup> Faik Öztürk.

<sup>7</sup> The Turkish President; see document No. 489.

<sup>8</sup> Presumably General Ali Fuad, director of the Military Academy; see document No.

## No. 476

585/242426-28

*The State Secretary to the Minister in Bulgaria*

BERLIN, June 5, 1939.

Pol. IV 3453.

During the visit of the Italian Foreign Minister to Berlin, it was agreed to continue trying to bring about a *rapprochement* of Bulgaria to the Axis Powers.<sup>1</sup> As you know and as was discussed in detail during your stay in Berlin,<sup>2</sup> the main assistance which we, as well as Italy, can give Bulgaria at present, is in armaments. This help which we are prepared to render to an exceptional extent and on which separate instructions follow, is, however, of course conditional upon Bulgaria not wavering but unequivocally defining her position *vis-à-vis* the Axis Powers. According to a telegram from the German Ambassador in Rome, dated May 31,<sup>3</sup> Count Ciano also spoke on these lines recently to the Bulgarian Minister<sup>4</sup> in Rome.

Authoritative circles in Bulgaria know that the country can only realize its national aspirations within the camp of the Axis Powers. Naturally the theme of Bulgaria's territorial demands calls for some caution in treatment, in view of our relations with her neighbours. For the time being we must, therefore, confine ourselves to a general but clear declaration of goodwill, and only let it be understood that we would not support territorial claims on Yugoslavia which, according to our information, are no longer being raised by Bulgaria.

The King and the Bulgarian Government will certainly understand that we are holding aloof from the Anglo-Turkish game of mediation between Bulgaria and Rumania in the Dobruja question, because we are convinced that fulfilment of Bulgarian wishes in this way is at present impossible. Rumania is obviously by no means willing to make any territorial concessions to Bulgaria. Bulgaria, however, and this is likewise our opinion, cannot forgo revision or content herself with small favours.

We welcome the fact that Bulgaria has resisted and continues to resist attempts to draw her into the Balkan Entente, which indeed, by its very nature, is mainly directed against her. This point has assumed even greater importance for us since Turkey's defection into the Anglo-French camp.

<sup>1</sup> No further record of a discussion on Bulgaria during Ciano's visit to Berlin to sign the Pact has been found; for the decision on this subject taken during the meeting at Milan, see document No. 341.

<sup>2</sup> No record has been found.

<sup>3</sup> Telegram No. 217 (not printed, 585/242419).

<sup>4</sup> Svetoslav Pomenov. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 60.

Finally we appreciate the view expressed to you also by the King<sup>5</sup> that Bulgaria will only be in a position to play a more active part in politics after she has improved the state of her armaments.

You are requested to be guided in your conversations by the point of view outlined above. You are further requested to watch developments in Bulgaria carefully, especially any influence emanating from elements in the opposite camp, and to report currently on all possibilities of *rapprochement*.<sup>6</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 415.

<sup>6</sup> Copies of this despatch were sent on June 9 to the Missions at Ankara, Athens, Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, London, Paris and Rome (8275/E588225-27).

## No. 477

8203/E683090-91

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2339

PARIS, June 5, 1939.

Sent June 6.

Subject: Propaganda Slogans.

With reference to despatch Pol. Spez. 62 of May 9.<sup>1</sup>

The political mentality of the French, the forms in which they express their political and cultural propaganda, the ideals and the moral character which they are accustomed to lend to their "mission in the world", seem to show, time and again, how much they make use of pure abstractions in formulating their ideological postulates, or how great is their need to clothe cultural and political developments in as simple juristic formulae as possible. They think in rational and formal terms. The motto of the Revolution, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity", proves this. One need only re-read Daladier's latest speeches to meet over and over again with examples of such moral abstractions serving as ideological postulates for politics and political conduct.

The result is that they have no understanding for basic political demands of a more dynamic character, which have a life of their own, are malleable, and cannot be directly put into juristic formulae. They dismiss them as foreign and dangerous. To this category belongs for example the concept of "living space". For the French mind it represents something like a moral wilderness or political jungle. For them the right to "living space" is the right to brutality and force, a

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (904/293654-56). This despatch instructed the Missions to report about the effect of German broadcasts abroad and, where possible, to suggest improvements, and also to draw attention to particularly severe attacks by foreign broadcasting stations against Germany and to submit proposals for effectively rebutting such attacks.

relapse into barbarism. Daladier, in his latest speech, on June 4,<sup>2</sup> displayed suitable horror at this bogey and repudiated the concept with violent gestures as inconceivable to him. For him there can be no sort of discussion on this subject. It was quite another matter, a short time ago, with the concept of "right to national self-determination". When Germany applied it in the Sudeten German question, the French felt as if caught in their own trap.

They seem also to have been caused a certain amount of worry recently by the slogan "Peace through Justice", a concept with which they are forced to come to terms because it fits into their formal way of thinking. If any proof of this be required, it can be found in a short article in *Le Temps* of May 23, 1939. "Justice in international affairs" is for *Le Temps* a theme "the importance of which it would like to commend to all writers, especially to all French jurists".

The above-mentioned paragraph from Daladier's speech and the article from *Le Temps*, "Responsibility and Justice", are enclosed.<sup>3</sup>

WELCZECK

<sup>2</sup> To the Executive Committee of the Radical Socialist Party in Paris. Welczeck sent a summary of the speech in despatch No. A 2346 of June 6 (not printed, 2796/548063-64).

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

## No. 478

472/228747-51

*Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

Moscow, June 5, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: May I thank you very much for your kind and very interesting letter of May 27.<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious that Japan would not like to see even the smallest agreement between us and the Soviet Union. The less our pressure becomes on Russia's Western frontier, the more strongly the weight of the Soviet Union will make itself felt in Eastern Asia. The Italians really ought to welcome a German-Russian arrangement; they themselves have always taken care to avoid a clash with Moscow, and the Reich could take a stronger stand toward France if Poland were kept in check by the Soviet Union and our Eastern frontier thus relieved. If the Italians nevertheless are "somewhat hesitant", the reason may be that they are not pleased to see the importance of the Reich within the Axis increase as a consequence of an improvement in German-Soviet relations and the resulting automatic increase in our power.<sup>2</sup>

It appears to me that Berlin has gained the impression that M.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 446.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence has a query mark pencilled by Weizsäcker against it in the margin.

Molotov had rejected a German-Soviet arrangement during the discussion with me. I have read through my telegram<sup>3</sup> once again and compared it with my letter to you and my memorandum.<sup>4</sup> I cannot discover what has given rise to this opinion in Berlin.<sup>5</sup> In reality, however, the fact is that M. Molotov almost invited political discussion. Our proposal for conducting economic negotiations only, appeared insufficient to him. Of course, there was and is the danger that the Soviet Government would utilize German proposals to put pressure on the British and French. In his speech,<sup>6</sup> M. Molotov at once made tactical use of our offer to begin economic negotiations. Caution on our part was and is therefore necessary, but it appears clear to me that no door has been shut and that the way is open for further negotiations.

We have heard and read with the very greatest interest of your conversation with M. Astakhov.<sup>7</sup> Incidentally, a few days after the despatch of my last letter to you, I had occasion to talk again with M. Potemkin about Soviet-German relations. I told him that I had racked my brains to discover what positive steps could be taken to realize the suggestion of M. Molotov. There were no points of friction, no controversial issues, between Germany and the Soviet Union. We had no frontier incidents to overcome and no difference to settle. We were asking nothing from the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union apparently [asked] nothing from us either. I asked M. Potemkin, with whom I can talk much more freely in private, whether he could now tell me anything about the ideas of M. Molotov. M. Potemkin answered this in the negative; unfortunately he could not add anything to the statements of M. Molotov, through whom the Soviet Government had spoken.<sup>8</sup>

I wonder whether your conversation with Astakhov will take the matter further. Herr von Tippelskirch has in my opinion rightly called attention to the fact that, through our Non-Aggression Pacts with the Baltic States, Russia has received from us free and for nothing an increase of security and thus a German political advance payment.

I should like to point out that in his speech M. Molotov mentioned three points which must definitely be fulfilled in order to bring the Anglo-Franco-Soviet alliance into being. In none of the three points is it anywhere mentioned that the demands of the Soviet Union refer exclusively to Europe. The Far East is indeed not mentioned by name but neither is it excluded.

<sup>3</sup> Of May 20; see document No. 414, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 424 and enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> On another copy (103/111398-401) this sentence is heavily underlined in Ribbentrop's green crayon and is marked in his handwriting: "Erledigt [Settled]" across the text, with two query marks in the margin.

<sup>6</sup> On May 31; see document No. 463.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 452.

<sup>8</sup> On the copy referred to in footnote 5 this sentence is heavily underlined and marked with two large exclamation marks in Ribbentrop's green crayon.

As far as I know, however, Great Britain is only willing to assume fresh commitments in Europe. From this a fresh controversy might arise should it prove possible to bring the Baltic States into the guarantee. The Soviet Russians are full of mistrust towards us but they do not trust the Democratic Powers either. Mistrust is extraordinarily easy to arouse here and once aroused can only be removed with great difficulty.

It is significant that Molotov in speaking of relations with Britain did not mention the invitations which the British Government, following the visit of Mr. Hudson to Moscow, have extended to Mikoyan<sup>9</sup> and, as alleged, recently to Voroshilov also.<sup>10</sup>

I learn from a generally reliable source that M. Potemkin was at the time sent to Ankara in such haste in order to prevent Turkey from coming to an agreement with the British. M. Potemkin was only able to prevent the signing of the treaty but could no longer stop the "declaration". The Soviet Government are thought to be in no way opposed in principle to an Anglo-Turkish agreement but to attach importance to Turkey not rushing ahead but acting at the same time and in the same manner as the Soviet Union.

The recent frontier incidents on the Mongolian-Manchurian frontier<sup>11</sup> seem to have been quite serious. According to Japanese claims, the "Mongolians" on May 28 employed 100 aeroplanes, 42 of which the Japanese say they have shot down. They claim that 17 aeroplanes had been shot down previously. In my opinion those responsible for these serious incidents are the Soviets. They constitute support for China; they are intended to prevent the Japanese from withdrawing their very strong concentrations of troops in Manchuria to China.

With very cordial greetings and with Heil Hitler,

I am, dear Herr von Weizsäcker,

Yours, etc.,

F. W. SCHULENBURG<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 175.

<sup>10</sup> People's Commissar for Defence; see also *ibid.*, No. 422.

<sup>11</sup> See also document No. 463 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>12</sup> The copy here printed is marked "Confidential" by Weizsäcker and bears a marginal note: "[For] Foreign Minister. W[eizsäcker] 7/6"; it is initialed "R[ibbentrop]". Marginal note on the copy referred to in footnote 5, in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]".

## No. 479

472/228715-16

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Minister Richthofen*

BERLIN, June 5, 1939.

DEAR RICHTHOFEN: Many thanks for your letter of May 25.<sup>1</sup> In it you mention earlier talks according to which we would be prepared to

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (472/228709-10).



support Bulgarian rearmament only if Bulgaria joined the Anti-Comintern Pact. This idea did in fact occur here once, and was suggested to the Bulgarian Minister, but not by the Foreign Ministry. When the Bulgarian Minister broached the subject to me, I at once put him off.<sup>2</sup> The episode is therefore a thing of the past.

In the conversations which took place here with Count Ciano, it was also agreed that we should give active support to Bulgaria's further *rapprochement* to the Axis Powers. By the same courier you will receive a despatch<sup>3</sup> on this, which will also elucidate the further political questions raised by you, so that I do not need to go into them again here.

We are quite agreed here that you should stay there [in Sofia] until the middle of June. I hope that the Führer will be able to receive you in the second half of June, and I shall send you a line when this is decided.

For your personal information I should like to add that the Reich Foreign Minister intends to invite the Bulgarian Minister President<sup>4</sup> to come to Berlin in the autumn. However, please say nothing about this yet.

With best regards and Heil Hitler,

Yours,

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 301, 302 and 303.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 476.

<sup>4</sup> Gheorghi Kiosseivanov.

## No. 480

585/242429-30

### *The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 70 of June 6

SOFIA, June 6, 1939—9:20 p.m.

Received June 7—2:15 a.m.

The Minister President again raised with me the subject of his intended journey to Germany and on this occasion unburdened himself about intrigues which had in the main originated with his own countrymen and had made him suspect in Berlin as an untrustworthy customer.<sup>1</sup> According to a remark made by Ambassador Attolico to M. Draganov, a report by the Italian Minister here<sup>2</sup> also seems to have played a part; the Minister must have completely misunderstood a statement made by him [the Minister President] about Soviet Russian attempts at mediation in the Dobruja question. He [the Minister President]

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<sup>1</sup> See also vol. v of this Series, document No. 312.

<sup>2</sup> Giuseppe Talamo Atenolfi, Marchese di Castelnuovo.

strongly emphasized that Bulgaria could and would conduct her policy only in accord with Germany. But, first, confidence must reign between us. If we distrusted him personally he was ready to resign office. I replied that I knew nothing of such intrigues. However, in the short time I had been here, even I had been struck by many things which had astonished me. Apart from Potemkin's second visit,<sup>3</sup> which had occurred before my arrival, there was the toleration of a definitely anti-German Pan-Slav propaganda. The Minister President replied that Potemkin would not be put off from coming to Sofia a second time, and thereupon he himself had asked the King to receive Potemkin and explain to him emphatically that Bulgaria would not let herself be harnessed to any front directed against Germany. The propaganda to which I had alluded was in actual fact insignificant and had no support in the country. Behind it was the intellectual clique, for years in the pay of the former Czecho-Slovak Minister, Maxa,<sup>4</sup> and which was now also subsidized by another source; these were the same people in opposition to him. In this connection he asked for a search to be made in Prague as to whether lists could not be found showing the contacts maintained with personages here. He would then be able to deal with these effronteries.

The Minister President then went on to speak of arms deliveries and urgently asked that the arms to be delivered from Czech stocks should be debited to the credit granted by us.<sup>5</sup> If this were not done, the matter would have to be brought up in the Sobranje and that could not take place before October. This, in view of the present tense situation, would be practically intolerable for Bulgaria. I promised to transmit his request, and in agreement with the Military Attaché,<sup>6</sup> I would like to endorse it heartily, in order that the Bulgarian Army be prepared for all eventualities by early autumn.

In these circumstances, may I suggest that the visit by the Minister President could perhaps be included in your programme for the summer, possibly even at the end of June. As instructed, I have up to the present tried to put a brake on such a visit, also with the King, but I think now that an earlier visit, which the King also described to me as desirable, would hearten the adherents of a common policy with Germany and would increase Bulgaria's self-confidence.

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 346.

<sup>4</sup> Prokop Maxa, Minister in Bulgaria, 1931-1939.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 243 and vol. v of this Series, document No. 181.

<sup>6</sup> Lt. Col. H. Bruckmann.

## No. 481

621/250781-82

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2347

PARIS, June 6, 1939.

Received June 7.

Pol. II 1973.

Subject: Conversation between an informant of the Embassy and the former Minister President, Flandin.

An informant of the Embassy, who is in general reliable, had a conversation with the former French Minister President, Flandin, on June 1, in which the latter is said to have spoken substantially as follows:

The Eastern problem was still extremely delicate. Absolutely reliable confidential information had strengthened his conviction that in London the war party had not only gained ground in the last few weeks, but had become the decisive factor in Great Britain's future attitude. The "Big Four" (Chamberlain, Hoare, Halifax, Simon), who had ranked as sponsors of peace, had been as good as excluded from active politics. Chamberlain and Hoare had become tired and had to bow to public opinion. Halifax had been won over by the warmongers and now took his cue, in the main, from Vansittart, whose anti-German attitude was known to all. Vansittart was moreover in closest contact with Churchill. Today people in Great Britain were convinced that the Führer wished to play the same role in Europe as Napoleon had played in the last century, and that therefore Britain's attitude to him must be similar to that adopted towards Napoleon. The British war party were particularly active in Poland, where the "intelligence service"<sup>1</sup> were assiduously trying to win over still hesitant circles in Warsaw, and in particular Colonel Beck, to an intransigent attitude towards the German Reich, in order to make any yielding by Poland impossible.

On the French side, resistance to Germany in the Danzig question was much less marked, although it must not be left out of account that the majority of the French people were resolved to meet a fresh German *coup de force* by every means, even by means of war. However, amongst all French possessed of any property—however small—there was a sincere wish to avoid war with Germany if possible. As a particularly important factor, Flandin marked out international Jewry, which today was not only intending to instigate a punitive war against Germany and Italy, but whose organizations were striving to hold all Europe responsible for tolerating the persecution of Jews, and to punish

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

Europe by a general war. International Jewry proceeded from the conviction that the decisive power was money and that mobilization of the money of Wall Street, which for the greater part belonged to the Jews of America and Europe, would realize the Messianic hope of Semitic world domination. Thus it could be said that the original aims of the Jews, who, up to a few weeks ago, had sponsored a war limited to the annihilation of the totalitarian States, had now broadened into an unrestricted general war; from the general collapse they hoped for the renaissance and predominance of Jewry.

H. WELCZEK

No. 482

2846/551242-44

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2090

PARIS, June 6, 1939.

Received June 12.

Pol. V 5286.

Subject: Communication from an informant on Polono-Anglo-French military conversations.

With reference to my report of May 30, 1939—A 2090—and my telegram No. 288 of May 24.<sup>1</sup>

The informant mentioned in the report under reference has provided the following additional information on the discussions here with the Polish Minister of War:

The British Lieutenant-General, who, as reported, is said to have attended the negotiations here with the Polish Minister of War, is believed to have been Sir John Dill, who first served in the Indian Army, was then Commander in Palestine, was subsequently Director of Military Intelligence of the British General Staff and is now General Officer Commanding, Aldershot Command. Sir John Dill was to direct the British Army's impending autumn manoeuvres, to which Voroshilov<sup>2</sup> and Rydz-Smigly<sup>3</sup> had been invited. Newspaper reports, however, state that Voroshilov has already declined the invitation, on the grounds that his presence is necessary in Russia because of the Russian Army's own autumn manoeuvres.

During his stay in France, Dill, in company with a number of British experts and members of the Embassy here, is said to have toured the whole French frontier and inspected the Maginot Line.

As for the Anglo-Polish military conversations, Polish officers were at present in London and a mission of British officers under the leader-

<sup>1</sup> Neither printed, see document No. 399, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> Soviet People's Commissar for Defence.

<sup>3</sup> Polish Commander in Chief and Inspector General of the Armed Forces.

ship of Colonel Clayton of the General Staff was in Warsaw. Official talks in which French officers would participate would soon take place in London. Meanwhile it has, in fact, been officially announced that General Gamelin is going to London in the next few days. The London talks would deal with the question of operational measures as well as with the problem of the supply of war material. The British and French are believed to desire the inclusion of Russian officers in the discussion as well, but the Poles wished to avoid General Staff talks with Russian military representatives and only to discuss the question of the supply of Russian war material.

A first success of the journey of the Polish Minister of War to France is said to be the suggestion for a war credit of 62 million zloty made by the firm of Alsthom, which, for this, would carry out electrification works in the Polish security triangle between the Bug and the San. The firm of Alsthom, on their side, are said to be covered by a guarantee from the French Ministry of Public Works. The above credit of 62 million is believed to be only part of the credits to be granted to the Poles, credits which the British and French are prepared to grant for supplies of war material.<sup>4</sup>

In the various military conversations, the question of the Supreme Command is said to be playing a certain part. The French and British Governments were agreed that, in the event of war, a French General (Gamelin) should be Commander-in-Chief of the land forces, while the command of naval forces should fall to a British Admiral. No agreement had yet been reached on the supreme command in the air. The British invoked the great potential of their Air Force, the French, on the other hand, claimed the supreme command for General Vuillemin, the Chief of the General Staff of the French Air Force.

In no circumstances did Poland want one Commander-in-Chief to be appointed for *all* land forces in the European theatre. They naturally agreed that France should hold the High Command on the Western Front; the Eastern Front on the other hand, including the Rumanian forces, would have to be commanded by a Polish General (Rydz-Smigly). Finally the Poles are said to propose a third, i.e., Turkish, High Command for the Turkish, Syrian and Egyptian forces.

The coordination of strategic and political actions is to be reserved for a joint commission of the Allied States.

H. WELCZECK.

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<sup>4</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 692 and 701.

## No. 483

96/107864

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

BERLIN, June 6, 1939.

The Foreign Minister has ruled that all departments of the Foreign Ministry be instructed no longer to receive any Turkish representatives. Requests for appointments for Turkish visitors, however, are not to be turned down categorically, but treated in a dilatory manner.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary.

SCHMIDT

## No. 484

116/66603-04

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division VI*

BERLIN, June 6, 1939.

e.o. Pol. VI 1458.

Estonia and Latvia, allied since 1923,<sup>1</sup> and, with Lithuania, members of the Baltic Entente since 1934,<sup>2</sup> have both, at the beginning of April, sharply rejected a Soviet Russian Note<sup>3</sup> which demanded from Estonia and Latvia the unconditional maintenance of their State sovereignty and of their political and economic independence; they stated emphatically that, on the basis of their sovereign status, they would themselves watch over their national independence and the inviolability of their neutrality.

In the last fortnight, the semi-official Estonian and Latvian press and the Estonian Foreign Minister, Selter, in conversation with the German Minister in Tallinn,<sup>4</sup> have unequivocally stated that both States were pursuing a policy of strict neutrality and did not wish, as a result of "guarantees" given by third parties, to submit themselves to the unilateral predominance of one State—meaning in fact the Soviet Union. The purpose of the Non-Aggression Pacts concluded by Estonia and Latvia with Soviet Russia in 1932<sup>5</sup> and of the German-Estonian

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 352, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> The Treaty of Understanding and Collaboration between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, signed at Geneva, Sept. 12, 1934. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 137, pp. 462-464.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 196, and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Hans Frohwein. He had reported on this conversation in telegram No. 56 of June 4 (not printed, 406/214398-99).

<sup>5</sup> For the text of the Treaty of Non-Aggression between the U.S.S.R. and Estonia of May 4, 1932, and of that between the U.S.S.R. and Latvia of Feb. 5, 1932, see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 135, pp. 478-480 and pp. 638-640 respectively.

and German-Latvian non-aggression pacts now to be concluded, is, in the Estonian and Latvian view, to demonstrate in tangible form, to the outside world as well, that the neutrality of their countries is assured on, so to speak, a basis of parity towards both sides. According to all reports available here, even British pressure has not so far succeeded in making Estonia and Latvia deviate from this political course. Both Governments see in the non-aggression pacts with Germany a welcome instrument for better enabling them to resist diplomatic pressure from the British and/or the Soviet Russian side. For the same reasons both countries would decline to accept a guarantee of their integrity by Germany. To Estonia, who in 1924 energetically quelled a Communist *putsch* instigated by Russia, we are bound by friendly ties,<sup>6</sup> also in the military field. Latvia, too, impressed by Greater Germany's growing strength, especially in the last year or so, has revised her attitude towards Germany and is now pursuing a policy of true neutrality.<sup>7</sup>

GRUNDHERR

<sup>6</sup> See also vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 348 and 360.

<sup>7</sup> This document is stamped "submitted to the Foreign Minister".

[EDITORS' NOTE: On June 6-7, Wohlthat visited London on business connected with Jewish emigration and attended a meeting of the Inter-governmental Committee, on which he wrote a report (not printed, 7051/E523908-13). On June 7, Wohlthat had a conversation on Anglo-German relations with Ashton-Gwatkin of the Foreign Office (see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 741). During this visit he also appears to have had a conversation with Sir Horace Wilson (see document No. 716 and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 354). No German record of either conversation has been found.]

## No. 485

F13/362-74

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

RAM 34

BERLIN, June 8,<sup>1</sup> 1939.

RECEPTION OF THE LATVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER, MUNTERS, BY THE FÜHRER IN THE PRESENCE OF THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND OF THE LATVIAN MINISTER ON JUNE 7, 1939, AT 11 A.M.

By way of introduction Munters conveyed greetings from his Government and expressed their pleasure at the conclusion of the Treaty<sup>2</sup> which would, he hoped, strengthen the friendship existing between the two

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

peoples. The Führer said that he too was very pleased, being interested in bringing more unity into Baltic problems. Germany was dependent upon continuous imports from these countries. Certain regions in the world were out of the question as trading partners for Germany; amongst such was, for instance, the USA. The soundest and most natural basis for commercial relations was not the question of whether countries had money or not, but whether they mutually complemented each other's needs. Giving credits was no policy for trade. He had never wanted credits for Germany and did not want them today. They could only cover a fraction of Germany's requirements and would result in an unhealthy indebtedness. Were Germany today to take up a credit of a thousand million, this, set off against her import requirements, would mean nothing at all.

Germany was dependent upon constantly importing and exporting and for this only countries also able to buy were of interest to her. Today everybody wanted to sell, but it was pointless for Germany to set high hopes upon exchange of goods with industrial countries. We were only interested in countries not greatly industrialized and Latvia was one of them. To back these countries and safeguard their independence was for Germany a vital interest.

The Führer then spoke in detail about the quality of German exports. Envious countries abroad reproached Germany with economically enslaving the small States. This was madness. The idea that anyone should want to conquer other States politically was illogical and absurd in the conditions of today. Apart from the great difficulties arising from taking over a country politically against its will, there was nothing to be gained by it.

In contrast to other States like America, Germany wanted not only to sell but also to buy. She was, in fact, a consumer on an immense scale. In considering such matters, it was unbelievably stupid to let oneself be influenced by ideological differences. One would end up by trading with a country as long as a given man was at the head of affairs, but promptly breaking off relations as soon as another man, whom one liked less, came to power. The basis of cooperation was, indeed, the need for each other's products and not any ideas or political ways of thinking. Commercial treaties for one, two, or five years were, therefore, of very little value, for economies had to adjust themselves to one another if really great results were to be achieved. This went for agricultural just as much as for industrial countries. Latvia, for instance, might have certain needs in machinery which would call for a change-over in branches of German industry, requiring large scale investments and much time. This, however, could only take place if economic treaties were concluded for 20, nay, for 30 years. There would, for instance, be no point in signing a commercial treaty with a country which, in return, could only deliver raw tobacco, which was



not required. On the other hand, a country need only switch over to producing soya beans to be sure that all it could possibly produce would always be bought by Germany. As an example of such commercial planning he mentioned Yugoslavia.

The Führer embarked on further explanations and pointed out the expediency of very long term commercial treaties. Industry and agriculture must be remodelled and reorganized. Success in this direction naturally presupposed political consolidation which must be pursued even if it entailed very heavy sacrifices. Here he mentioned Eupen-Malmédy, Alsace, the South Tyrol, etc. To Poland, too, he had made such an offer which had also meant for him a stupendous sacrifice, which he alone and no one else amongst the German people could have carried through. But the Poles were today pursuing a truly fantastic policy, of which he could only say that, if it were not changed, a terrible catastrophe would result.

The Führer then spoke of relations with Britain and showed that the British were responsible for the fact that better German-British relations had not come about. Germany had only one demand to make to Britain and that was for the German colonies. It was simply preposterous that the right to possess colonies should be conceded as a matter of course to every little country in Europe, whilst it was withheld from the great German people. Britain could not possibly feed her 170 people per square kilometre without colonies, and if told today that they must do without colonies, every Briton would call this an absurd idea. The same, however, held good for Germany. Germany needed colonies and would also get them again. The British point of view showed that British policy was conducted, not by statesmen, but by dilettanti.

Slovakia was completely worthless to Germany, even as an economic area. The only commodity she could supply was timber. But the means of transport there were so bad that this timber could not be got out of the country. To improve the means of transport, however, would require sums of money which the Slovak people were unable to raise themselves and which, even for Germany, were too heavy ever to be a paying investment. In case of a conflict with Poland, Slovakia would be strategically important, but in the event of good relations with Poland, Slovakia was of no interest to us at all.

Turning to Russia, the Führer admitted that we were extraordinarily badly informed about her. Like everybody else, we were quite well informed about all that met the eye, but what went on in the minds of Russia's rulers and what were their aims remained for us a complete enigma.

Munters thought that the sole aim of the Russian leaders at the moment was to hold the State together. It was a day-to-day policy without any great objectives or ideas. This could already be seen in

the advent of new concepts, such as the Soviet as a Great Power, the Russian People and the like, concepts which under pure Communism had simply not existed.

The Führer said that this was also his view. Germany was not at all afraid of Russia. Nor did we allow ourselves to be taken in by figures. We had shown that on many occasions and had been proved right. What Germany wanted was not war, but to make her people happy. Never yet in the history of the world had plans been made on so grand a scale as in Germany. And it was an indication of the will to peace that these plans were often made to cover a period of 20 to 30 years. He then rehearsed at length facts on German welfare organizations, on the construction of roads and the projects for canals, on Work and Beauty, Strength through Joy, and on the plan to construct one million dwellings, and such like topics.

It was also important that more and more countries should detach themselves from a world gone completely mad, in order to work in unison and also to achieve mental equilibrium. For that was the foundation of all economic prosperity. What was going on today in Britain passed the bounds of understanding. People had allowed the press to put them into a state of mind which impeded any normal development. It was no longer possible in London to sell a house, because everyone believed it would be destroyed by bombs anyway, and so on. In such crises and chaos, dictated by fear and panic, there could be no productive economy, no long term planning, or long term financial investment either. He was glad that the German people were calm, for this was the guarantee of an unprecedented economic and cultural advance, such as the German people were at the moment experiencing, and which he desired for them. Other countries had gold and many unemployed. Germany had neither foreign exchange nor gold and yet was in the midst of a wonderful advance, and this proved that his economic theories were right, though he had been declared insane by the greatest economists. He would rather have factories working, producing, and alive, than dead ingots in the vault, and, in this connection, he drew comparisons with the USA.

Munters told the Führer that he shared his views. Thus he saw in the Pact, too, not only a military non-aggression guarantee, but first and foremost a psychologically reassuring act. He was glad that economic relations between the two peoples were developing so favourably. On the question of manpower Latvia was faced with almost the same problems as Germany. They also had too few men and would therefore not build up any great industries, but were glad if they could restrain the people they had from drifting into the towns and could keep them in agriculture. Unfortunately, they had, among their two million inhabitants, very many foreign workers, for instance forty thousand Poles. But they hoped to overcome this drawback soon.

The Führer spoke further about the possibility of exchanging goods and, in this connection, he dealt at length with the article which he described as the greatest stroke of genius which Germany had ever produced in the export field, and which he believed would become the greatest article of German export, especially to the Eastern countries which were not so richly blessed with financial resources—namely, the People's Car and a tractor, both of which were unique in quality, and either of them available at a purchase price of less than 1,000 RM.

Germany also realized, and Munters agreed, that Latvia needed arms, and in this field, too, Germany was able to compete in quality. There, too, economic planning over a long period must be made possible by concluding long term commercial treaties, in order that agriculture in Latvia, and industry in Germany, could be geared to a sound mutual exchange of goods. He would rather do business with goods, which represented concrete values, than with foreign exchange, which could be hoarded but which, for all one knew, might depreciate the next day. The basis of world economy was not money but production.

The conversation was carried on in the most friendly manner and lasted fifty-five minutes.<sup>3</sup>

HEWEL

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum, RAM 35 (not printed, 116/66613-21) also dated June 8, Hewel recorded the Führer's conversation with the Estonian Foreign Minister, who was received at midday on June 7, in the presence of Ribbentrop and the Estonian Minister. The record of Hitler's statements on this occasion approximates closely to that of those made by him to Munters.

## No. 486

1625/368832

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 92 of June 7

Moscow, June 7, 1939—2:28 p.m.

Received June 7—7:15 a.m. [sic].

Pol. II 1977.

With reference to my telegram No. 84 of June 1.<sup>1</sup>

In comment on the views of the British and French press about the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations printed in today's *Pravda*,<sup>2</sup> it is pointed out:

1. That the latest Soviet amendments proposed, which correspond exactly with the statements made by Molotov to the Supreme Soviet, represent minimum conditions for building up a defensive front against further aggression in Europe (the Far East would thus be excluded from the pact);

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 463.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 730.

2. That the adjacent Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Finland are meant thereby (by the inclusion of Finland in the guarantee system, the Aaland question would also come within the scope of Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations);

3. That the Soviet minimum conditions amount to:

a) the conclusion of an effective pact of mutual assistance between Britain, France, and the Soviet Union,

b) the rendering of assistance by the Soviet Union to the five States already guaranteed by Britain and France,

c) the rendering of assistance by Britain, France, and the Soviet Union to Estonia, Latvia and Finland, in the event of violation of their neutrality by aggressors (by contrast, however, Molotov in his drafting committee is thought to have demanded the guarantee of these States),

d) the conclusion of a concrete agreement on methods, form and extent of assistance.

From the selection of foreign press views, it emerges that the Soviet Union attaches particular importance to the guarantee of Estonia, Latvia and Finland.

SCHULENBURG

### No. 487

174/135964

#### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, June 7, 1939—2:40 p.m.

SECRET

Received June 7—10 a.m.

No. 238 of June 7

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 235 of June 5.<sup>1</sup>

I hear in strict confidence from an absolutely reliable Army source that, on the evening of June 5, instructions were despatched by telegram to Ambassador Oshima. According to this, Japan would be prepared to take part automatically in any war of Germany's, provided Russia were one of Germany's adversaries. Should Russia, in a conflict between Germany and third Powers, remain neutral, Japan would only enter the war if and when it were agreed that her entry was in the common interest of the Allies. My confidant emphasized that the Army and the Navy had, after long negotiations, reached agreement on the above solution. This represents substantial progress, as the Navy has dropped its previous reservation, making Japan's entry into war against the Western Powers dependent exclusively upon Japanese interests.

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 467, footnote 2.

## No. 488

1625/388887-38

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 224

BERLIN, June 7, 1939—8:30 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. II 1994.

Please see Gafencu before his departure for Ankara<sup>1</sup> and speak to him on the following lines:

Turkey's open defection to the camp of the encirclement Powers is regarded here as a clear violation of the declaration, repeatedly made to us by Turkey, that she would never join any combination directed against Germany. It is obvious that we shall adjust our attitude to Turkey accordingly. The argument repeatedly put forward by Turkey that the Anglo-Turkish agreement had been caused by Italy's behaviour and was directed against Italy but in no way against Germany, we can in no wise accept. Everything directed against Italy is likewise directed against us.

Whether Turkey veers even further away now depends partly on the Balkan States. If Rumania, and also Greece and Yugoslavia, make it absolutely clear in Ankara that they will not, either directly or in any veiled manner, become an object of Anglo-Turkish agreements, this will perhaps not be without effect on Turkey and Britain. We therefore expect the Rumanian Foreign Minister to speak with absolute clarity and firmness in Ankara, and that indeed in Rumania's own interests. Rumania must understand that we regard her conduct in this situation as a touchstone of German-Rumanian relations. Please make clear, in the course of this conversation, that you speak under express instructions. You can also support your arguments by saying that Cincar-Marković has stated in Berlin<sup>2</sup> that he would never be a party to undermining the Balkan Pact, he would rather leave it.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Gafencu paid an official visit to Ankara, June 11-14. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 12 and 13.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 474.

<sup>3</sup> This telegram was repeated, on the same day, to the Missions at Ankara, Belgrade, Rome and Athens.

## No. 489

1625/388834-35

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

ANKARA, June 7, 1939—11:25 p.m.

No. 185 of June 7

Received June 8—4 a.m.

Pol. II 1978.

Today I had extensive discussions with:

1) Numan on a few questions of detail and on the general situation. His views seem to be approaching closer to ours again, as he assured me that Turkey would continue to refrain from any action which might be harmful to Germany. In reply to my direct question about the ultimate scope of the new commitments, he told me that Turkey felt herself bound solely in the Mediterranean, while a Polish-British-German conflict would find Turkey neutral, as long as it took place in the north. It appears, therefore, that they wish to disinterest themselves in all cases which, as they hope, will not lead to an Anglo-Italian conflict in the Mediterranean. To my very sharp demand for immediate cessation of press attacks against us, he replied that strict instructions had been issued to this effect on Saturday. On the question of deliveries, Numan asked that we should not pursue a policy of pinpricks as he certainly trusted that our relations would survive this critical period.

2) President İnönü, who detained me more than an hour and in whose whole attitude I sensed an urgent desire to maintain friendly relations with us, reciprocated most cordially the greetings from the Führer, whose policy I expounded in detail. My urgent warnings against Turkey allowing herself to be exploited by Britain in her so-called peace front, he answered with the declaration that Turkey needed a strong independent Germany in the centre of Europe and would never do anything to weaken Germany's position. On the contrary Turkey would urge her new partners to take steps at last and expeditiously towards solving German problems, in order that a catastrophe be avoided. I referred to the Non-Aggression Pacts signed by Germany in these days<sup>1</sup> as tangible proofs of her love of peace, by contrast to the unprecedented warmongering of the others and their attempts to close their markets to us. The President believed this last to be wrong since Britain herself had encouraged Turkey to continue commercial relations with us. I made it clear to him that this would only be to Britain's advantage, since no one else could accept Turkish products at such high prices as we could.

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

The maintenance of our friendship had to be made dependent on the extent and duration of Turkish commitments. Until then everything remained undecided. The President replied that in matters of life and death commercial affairs played a subordinate role. He hoped to maintain the cordial nature of our relations. He had therefore ordered that our refusal to fulfil the Skoda contract<sup>2</sup> should not appear in the press. For he recalled that the withholding of two dreadnoughts<sup>3</sup> in 1914, when Turkey was still neutral, had contributed very substantially to the decision to declare war on Britain, and that public opinion had not yet forgotten that. He then asked me what would be Germany's attitude if, in our opinion, it proved impossible to follow the course hitherto adopted. I replied that we should then have to confine ourselves to purely commercial relations in accordance with our own interests.

The President asked me to tell the Reich Foreign Minister that he had every hope that Germany, with the usual steady German nerves, would weather the present world-wide disquietude. He sincerely desired to cooperate with us for a peaceful solution of our problems.

Both conversations show me that anxiety over Italy has lessened, that the danger of complications arising from the British pact is more clearly realized, and that our trump stands good chances so long as the atmosphere is not clouded by irritations.<sup>4</sup>

PAPEN<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 454.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original. The reference is to the action of the British Government in commandeering two battleships building for Turkey in Britain, following the outbreak of war.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 186 of June 8 (not printed, 2950/576526) Papen asked whether, in view of his conversation with the President, at least a few aircraft could not be released for delivery to Turkey. Clodius replied by telegram on June 10 (not printed, 2950/576527) agreeing to delivery of a few aircraft.

<sup>5</sup> For a further account of these conversations, see document No. 495. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 738, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 180.

## No. 490

276/178668-72

### *Unsigned Memorandum by the Embassy in the Soviet Union*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

Moscow, June 7, 1939.

A 1173

In the conversation with the Ambassador, Count von der Schulenburg, on May 20, 1939,<sup>2</sup> the President of the Council of People's

<sup>1</sup> A cover note to this document (276/178667) dated Moscow, June 8, reads: "Submitted herewith to the Ambassador, von Toppelskirch". No evidence that the above memorandum was sent to Berlin has been found, but it appears possible that Schulenburg took it with him on the visit to Berlin referred to in document No. 499.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 424.

Commissars and Foreign Commissar, M. Molotov, stated that for any economic negotiations a "political basis" would first of all have to be found. M. Molotov did not go into detail on what he understood by a "political basis". As M. Molotov, at the same time, expressed his doubts as to the seriousness of the economic negotiations initiated by us some time ago, considerable efforts will be required from us if it is desired to put relations between Germany and the Soviet Union on a normal basis. The measures to be adopted would have to extend to the sphere of domestic policy as well as that of foreign policy.

The following measures might be considered for constructing a "political basis":

### *I. Measures in the sphere of domestic policy*

1) A clear-cut separation of National Socialism and Communism would have to be made, on the principle of mutual non-interference.

2) Care would have to be taken that no inflammatory talks and mutual mud-slinging occurred in speeches, the press and on the radio.

3) Both sides would have to be enabled to participate in international scientific congresses and other meetings taking place in Germany or the Soviet Union. On such occasions, any discrimination in public against the participants or the achievements of either side would have to be avoided. Furthermore, an exchange of artists and scholars should again be permitted.

### *II. Measures in the sphere of foreign policy*

The primary object will be to revive the Neutrality Treaty (Berlin Treaty) of April 24, 1926,<sup>3</sup> between Germany and the Soviet Union, which has become obsolete. It will be recalled that the Treaty, which was carried unanimously in the Reichstag at the time, was extended for an indefinite period on May 5, 1933.<sup>4</sup> The kernel of the treaty is article 2. This reads:

"Should one of the Contracting Parties in spite of its peaceful conduct be attacked by a third Power or several third Powers, the other Contracting Party will observe neutrality for the whole duration of the conflict."

It is important to note that during the Czechoslovak crisis the Soviet Government took the view that in the event of a German-Czechoslovak conflict they would in any case regard Germany as the aggressor. Therefore it is a matter of restoring, so to speak, the "bona fides" which would lead, if occasion arises, to the attribution of "peaceful conduct" to Germany when defining the aggressor.

<sup>3</sup> For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 125, pp. 738-741, and *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1926, Part II, pp. 360-362.

<sup>4</sup> By a Protocol signed in Moscow on June 24, 1931, and ratifications exchanged on May 5, 1933; see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1933, Part II, pp. 311-312.



For this something like the following would be necessary:

1) Establishing that, between Germany and the Soviet Union, there exist no issues affecting vital questions, and that neither Germany nor the Soviet Union has any vital claim against the other.

2) A declaration about German intentions in respect of Poland.

3) Stressing the fact that the Soviet Union has obtained increased security from the Non-Aggression Pacts concluded between Germany and the Baltic States.

4) Formal confirmation of the fact that the German-Soviet Neutrality Treaty of April 24, 1926, continues in force unchanged.

5) Beyond the measures mentioned in Nos. 1-4, an agreement might be envisaged on the ratio between the German and Soviet fleets in the Baltic. Further, this agreement might provide for an arrangement to safeguard the trade routes in the Baltic. Such an agreement might be of interest to Germany. In view of the increase in the Soviet Baltic fleet Germany has been compelled continuously to increase her naval forces in the Baltic. In other words: Germany must maintain warships in the Baltic which would otherwise be available in the North Sea. Furthermore, safeguarding the shipments of iron ore from Sweden to Germany is a matter of vital importance to us. The existence of a German-Soviet agreement on trade routes might be of no mean advantage in the event of a German-Polish conflict. Finally, a German-Soviet agreement in the Baltic would not fail to exert an influence on the other Baltic States and in particular strengthen Finland and Sweden in their powers of resisting any attempts by the Soviet Union and Britain to influence them. The Soviet Union too might be interested in a Baltic arrangement.

### *III. Measures in the economic sphere*

In the event of an economic agreement being reached, it would have to be stipulated that the German Government be entitled to re-open the German Consulate General in Leningrad, which was closed eighteen months ago. In return, the Soviet Government would be granted the right to re-open the former Soviet Consulate General in Hamburg. Consular representation is needed in view of the mutual increase in shipping to be expected from the economic agreement.

### *IV. Other questions*

A possible normalization of relations between Germany and the Soviet Union ought certainly to be used to relieve the conditions of Reich citizens under arrest in the Soviet Union, this to be done through a generous policy of general and speedy expulsion, as also through an extensive amnesty for those sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Furthermore, an arrangement ought to be reached on related questions

(release from Soviet citizenship of wives of Reich nationals, repatriation of children of expelled Reich nationals left behind in the Soviet Union, disposal of house property left behind, transfer of rouble bank deposits and savings accounts of expelled Reich nationals).

## No. 491

103/111403-04

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*[BERLIN, June 7].<sup>1</sup>

As emerges from Hilger's memorandum of June 2, 1939,<sup>2</sup> People's Commissar Mikoyan asked Counsellor Hilger what *modus procedendi* we envisaged in the question of the economic negotiations. Counsellor Hilger thereupon replied that he had no proposals to make and merely referred to Count Schulenburg's conversation with Molotov.<sup>3</sup> Mikoyan reserved his reply to Hilger's statement.

In view of this trend of the conversation we can hardly count on an early reply from Mikoyan. Given the not very positive attitude adopted by Counsellor Hilger during this conversation, it also appears very doubtful what this reply of Mikoyan's will be. On the other hand, we are particularly anxious, at the present stage of Anglo-Soviet negotiations, to avail ourselves of the chance to intervene in Moscow. The very fact of direct German-Soviet talks in Moscow would be apt to drive a further wedge into the Anglo-Soviet negotiations.

In order to break the deadlock in the question of our economic negotiations reached as a result of the Mikoyan-Hilger conversation, I suggest the following:

In the next few days I have to discuss other questions (service of the Soviet-Czech loan by the Soviet Union) with the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Astakhov. On this occasion, I would say to M. Astakhov that, with reference to Mikoyan's question about the *modus procedendi* and that part of Molotov's speech dealing with economic negotiations with Germany,<sup>4</sup> I thought it would be useful if the question of the *modus procedendi* could be cleared up in a personal conversation between Mikoyan and myself. I would be ready to come to Moscow for this purpose and would ask Astakhov to ascertain from Mikoyan whether he could receive me in the course of next week for such a conversation. If this talk between Mikoyan and myself, which would be more of an informatory nature, should take a favourable course, I would have

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is undated, but was initialled by Clodius on June 7.

<sup>2</sup> Not found, but see document No. 465.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 424.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 463.

plenary powers to negotiate myself also over the envisaged economic treaty.

Submitted through Minister Clodius and the State Secretary to the Foreign Minister with the request for instructions.<sup>5</sup>

SCHNURRE

<sup>5</sup> No instructions have been found, but see document No. 514.

No. 492

7261/E532768-70

*Staatsrat Böttcher to Consul General Janson*

DANZIG, June 7, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON JANSON: Herewith I am forwarding to you a minute on a conversation between President Greiser and Professor Burekhardt.

Best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours, etc.,

VIKTOR BÖTTCHER

[Enclosure]

DANZIG, June 6, 1939.

MINUTE

Professor Burekhardt called on me at 12 noon today.

He informed me that he had had a long conversation with Gauleiter Forster last Wednesday<sup>1</sup> and had then left for Berlin. There he had spent an evening with State Secretary von Weizsäcker. While they were together he had cleared up a slight misunderstanding regarding a report from the Italian Consul General, Spechel.<sup>2</sup>

The next day he had been received by Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop with whom he had had a lengthy conversation.<sup>3</sup> Germany's relations with Britain had been discussed in detail. The Reich Foreign Minister had made it clear to him that the British had not accepted many kinds of offers from Germany. As to Danzig, the Reich Foreign Minister took the view that it was hardly possible to operate on an inflamed appendix and that there would first have to be a certain amount of tranquillity in Danzig and Corridor questions before the Führer proceeded to settle them. The Reich Foreign Minister had informed him that the Führer intended to settle these questions in any case and that Germany would also risk a war over them. No one in Germany was afraid of this war, since not only the German Wehrmacht but also every German man and woman would do their utmost to ensure victory.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., May 31.

<sup>2</sup> Nothing on this has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 464.

We then discussed Burckhardt's intended departure and he informed me that he was going to Basle to attend an academic ceremony at the university there on which occasion another doctorate would be conferred upon him. He then told me in confidence that he would also be going to Geneva for a few days in order to have an opportunity of clearing up some erroneous views on the situation in Danzig. He asked me whether I was able to advise him to take his wife and family back with him to Danzig afterwards. I answered this question in the affirmative, went into details and begged him to take them.

In conclusion M. Burckhardt made some further observations to the effect that in this situation involving the whole of Europe, in his opinion, Soviet Russia's attitude was decisive. He personally did not think that Russia would enter into any sort of commitments with one side or the other, and thus peace would be ensured, to a certain extent, by the balance of power. He went on to say that what had given him the greatest pleasure in his conversation with Reich Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop was that he had gathered that now, on the German side too, the possibility of reaching agreement by means of negotiations had emerged.

GREISER

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[EDITORS' NOTE: On June 7, 1939, the German Non-Aggression Treaties with Estonia and Latvia and Protocols of Signature were signed. Their texts (not printed, 2871/563536-43 and 2871/563743-50) are, *mutatis mutandis*, identical with those of the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Protocol of Signature signed by Germany and Denmark on May 31 (see document No. 461) except for the addition of the following paragraph to Article 2 of the Treaty:

"The Treaty will not, however, remain in force longer than the corresponding Treaty signed today between Germany and Latvia (Estonia). Should the Treaty lapse on these grounds before the end of the period laid down in paragraph 2, the German Government and the Estonian (Latvian) Government will, at the desire of one of the Contracting Parties, immediately enter into negotiations for the renewal of the Treaty."

Ratifications of both Treaties were exchanged on July 24, 1939. For the texts of these Treaties see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1939, Part II, pp. 945-946 and 947-948.]

## No. 493

1625/388639

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 193 of June 8

LONDON, June 8, 1939.

Received June 9—11:00 a.m.

A member of the Japanese Embassy informed me that the Japanese Government had informed the British Government, through the Embassy here, that a settlement of the difficulties existing between Great Britain and Japan would be made considerably harder to reach by the conclusion of an Anglo-Soviet alliance. This would apply even if the alliance did not extend to the Far East. A similar warning is said to have been received by the British Ambassador in Tokyo.

DIRKSEN

## No. 494

650/255791

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 234 of June 8

ROME, June 8, 1939—2:40 p.m.

Received June 8—4:55 p.m.

Pol. III 2448.

Mussolini, at last night's dinner,<sup>1</sup> expressed his satisfaction to me on his impressions of an hour and a half's conversation with Suñer. Among other things, he had pointed out to his Spanish guest, whom he appears to have liked personally, that if the Axis Powers were involved in a war today, no one would think of asking Spain for military aid. Should, however, the case arise in two or three years' time, the position would be quite different. Spain by remaining neutral would then be bringing about her own downfall. Suñer was in agreement with this view.<sup>2</sup>

MACKENSEN

<sup>1</sup> Given at the Palazzo Venezia on the occasion of the return of a contingent of Italian Legionaries from Spain.

<sup>2</sup> See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entries of June 5-7 and 9-14, 1939.

## No. 495

1625/888931-38

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1225

ANKARA, June 8, 1939.

Received June 13.

Pol. II 2227.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversations with the President of the Republic, the Foreign Minister and the Secretary General.

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 181 of June 5<sup>1</sup> and 185 of June 7,<sup>2</sup> I am rendering the following detailed account of my extensive conversation with the President of the Republic, the Foreign Minister and the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry.

Keen interest in becoming acquainted with our view of the situation caused the President to receive me already yesterday for a talk which lasted more than an hour. I told him that the Führer and Chancellor had entrusted me with giving him once again a comprehensive account in broad outline of the line of foreign policy adopted by the Reich. He would then perhaps better understand why Turkey's departure from the proven policy of strict neutrality and her defection to the enemy's camp had caused the most serious surprise in Germany. In his speech of May 29,<sup>3</sup> the President had given as the reason for this turn in policy the fact that Turkey could not condone the absorption by a Great Power of small weak nations, and that she had therefore joined the British "peace" front. This view was based on a fundamental error. The "espace vital" which was always spoken of here and which was the supposed motive for Germany's policy of expansion, constituted—apart from the colonial problem—no geographical concept whatever. Only during the last few days—and here I referred to the signing today of Non-Aggression Pacts with Estonia and Latvia<sup>4</sup>—the Reich had again shown the whole world that it was pursuing a constructive policy of peace. In sharp contrast to this stood British policy, which, just as before 1914, was trying to rid itself of the embarrassing claim of the Axis Powers to the right to live, by assembling an overwhelming coalition.

What I said about these characteristics of the British encirclement policy which were leading to catastrophe, such as the attempts to bring

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 475.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 489.

<sup>3</sup> In his speech to the Fifth Grand Congress of the Republican People's Party in Ankara.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

about a Triple Pact with Bolshevism which, as Turkey knew, Britain had described only four weeks ago as impossible, seemed deeply to impress the President. No one so far seemed to have pointed out to him this side of the medal. He replied (and, I think, from deepest conviction) that it was *vitally important* for Turkey to know that there was a strong, unweakened, powerful Germany in the heart of Europe. "But why," I interrupted "if you have recognized this balance of power as necessary for Europe, do you join the side which is trying to destroy this balance of power? The Reich Government cannot raise any objections if Turkey pursues a policy which safeguards her own interests. Here, however, Turkey has placed herself in a position where she is only doing other people's business, without herself being able to exert the slightest influence towards the removal of the real causes for conflict, i.e., that—finally, after twenty years' struggle—Germany's true vital interests should be taken into account." The President interrupted me by saying that Turkey would naturally do everything to bring Germany's still outstanding problems to a solution. "To do that," I said "you have, however, chosen the worst possible policy. When you read the world press you will see what great moral support you have given our opponents by abandoning your policy of neutrality. Your own Turkish press has apparently not yet realized what influence this policy will have on the future of your own country." I then showed him the Turkish newspaper *République* of June 2 which had published an article on the "political defeat of Herr von Papen". The newspaper said: "L'échec est, en effet, de taille, nous allons le montrer: c'est, tout simplement, la clef des Détroits qui passe du côté Franco-Anglais." This statement seemed to me to show that the "échec" was perhaps more on Turkey's side. The President noted this explanation with some surprise. He repeated to me that the policy pursued by him was designed to serve Turkish security in the *Mediterranean* exclusively and intended no damage to German interests. He took note with thanks of my statements that there was in every respect solidarity between the interests of the Axis Powers, that Italy had no hostile intentions whatsoever towards Turkey, and that Albania was being developed into a strong bridgehead because Italy, even more than Turkey, was vitally interested in the undisturbed neutrality and prosperity of the Balkan States.

The conversation then turned, as on previous visits, to the question of whether, and how, in present circumstances German-Turkish relations could be maintained. As instructed,<sup>5</sup> I expounded the point of view of the Reich Government. We could only make our decisions when we were in a position to assess the full scope of the Anglo-Turkish agreements. In the present conditions, Turkey seemed to have bound

<sup>5</sup> No record has been found of these instructions which were presumably given whilst Papen was in Berlin at the end of May. See also document No. 475.

herself hand and foot and to be forced automatically to take part in any conflict that arose. If the extent of these obligations could be limited in the final Anglo-Turco-French pact (by this I meant: short period set for treaty and/or possibility of denunciation; definition of aggressor made dependent on Turkey's own decision; treaty obligations coming into play only in case of a threat to her own interests; no pressure on the Balkan Powers to join the coalition), then it would perhaps be possible for Turkey to revert to her former line of policy in the near future.

Both the President and the Foreign Minister said that their great desire was to keep the close relations hitherto obtaining unclouded. They were aware that Germany was the only great nation altruistic in her activities in Turkey. They were thankful for the great support so far given to Turkey's development but they also asked us to consider what the consequences of a revision of the German attitude would be if the younger generation of Turks, as many as 80 per cent of whom were today educated in and by Germany, were in future to derive their cultural and political education from France or Britain.

The President was particularly anxious to know what would be our attitude if, in our opinion, the Anglo-Turkish pact made a continuation of present relations impossible. I replied that such a decision would first affect our mutual relations in the military-political sphere. In the sphere of trade policy we would continue, as we did with all countries, to cultivate relations but would take only our own interests into account. The President, and particularly also the Secretary General, said, on this, that, if the continuation of the present line were to be safeguarded, as desired, we ought not to create an atmosphere of mutual exacerbation. I told him that the German press was confining itself to inveighing merely against the political consequences of Turkey's attitude. By contrast, I could not but note a distinct hostility in the Turkish press. Presumably this propaganda was necessary to make it clear to the Turkish people why the Germans, the friends of yesterday, had suddenly become the enemies of today. The Foreign Minister and the Secretary General entirely agreed with me that this propaganda must cease forthwith. The latter said that he had given strict instructions to that end, in particular also about certain caricatures of the Head of the German State.

As to our deliveries, I said that we had no desire to pursue a "policy of pinpricks". Satisfaction should be found in the fact that, even in this period of tension, by far the greater part of our obligations were being fulfilled as stipulated by treaty. Arrears could be made up if and when the political attitude of Turkey warranted this. The President then, as already reported, turned to the non-delivery of the 24 cm guns and said that if the press took up the question of the withholding of these guns (also by reference to the fact that Turkey had already concluded this contract with Czechoslovakia) then Turkish public



opinion might very easily be driven further into the British camp. He recalled the withholding in 1914 of the dreadnoughts built for Turkey in Britain and the effect which this step had had on Turkey's readiness to join the German side. The Secretary General further mentioned that the delivery of Turkish raw materials was covered by State orders. Thus, if part of these State orders were not fulfilled the further shipment of raw materials (chrome) would have to be proportionately reduced. To all three gentlemen I expressed the view that I thought it opportune not to touch on any of these points until such time as, after the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish pact, a general decision on our mutual relations could be taken.

The most interesting point in these three conversations seems to me the remark made by the Secretary General, who, as is well known, is the leading political mind, that Turkey would *only engage herself in defence of her Mediterranean interests*. To my definite question as to what would be Turkey's attitude in the event of an Anglo-Polono-German conflict, he replied that as long as such a conflict did not extend to the Mediterranean, and the Balkan Allies were not attacked, it would in no way be in Turkey's interest to abandon her neutrality. They presumably imagined that it would be possible to localize a conflict of this kind in Northern Europe. I did not contradict this interesting view because I believe they have already reached the decision here to leave the Balkans completely out of the Turco-British combination. But I cannot imagine that it could be possible to exclude from the Mediterranean a conflict in which Britain was engaged.

In my conversation with the President I deliberately stressed primarily the military aspects. As an old soldier he prefers to be spoken to about military realities rather than political niceties. In this respect it seemed to me that my representations on the military strength of the Axis Powers, and the necessity which might arise for a joint operation against the Straits, made a particular impression on him. The Axis Powers only had a benevolent interest in Turkey as long as she played the part of a neutral, dependable guardian of the Straits. Given the identity of our military interests, it seemed to me better for Turkey to make up her mind now as to who were actually her true friends. The President made no objection and said that he hoped that Germany with her well known steady nerves would weather this critical period of European tension and that a peaceful solution of the vital German problems would be achieved. My general impression is that the reverse side of the British medal is already being more clearly perceived here, also owing to exacerbation over the Hatay negotiations.<sup>6</sup> Now the

<sup>6</sup> See documents Nos. 3, 59 and 72; see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 415. In telegrams Nos. 135 of June 8 and 137 of June 10 (not printed, 1625/388841-42 and 1625/388848-49) Woermann sent the Embassy in Ankara information from a confidential source indicating that fresh difficulties had arisen in the Franco-Turkish negotiations on the Hatay.

German trump card can no longer be played off against the French! We shall probably succeed in excluding the Balkans from the combination<sup>7</sup> but the warmth of the new Anglo-Turkish friendship will be markedly influenced by the character of the Anglo-Russian agreements.

M. Saracoğlu intends going to Moscow soon, in order, it may be assumed, to coordinate there the links with the "peace front". This business will therefore still take some time. *In this intermediate stage* our tactics—the threat of breaking off our friendly relations—will be successful as long as we can prove our goodwill in the field of deliveries under contract and can avoid major irritations.<sup>8</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: " ? See Papen's latest telegram." (This reference is presumably to document No. 518, as the present document is initialed by Weizsäcker on June 15.)

<sup>8</sup> This document is also initialed "R[jibbentrop]". According to reports from the British and Italian Ambassadors in Ankara (see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 54, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 180) Papen also had a conversation with the Turkish Minister of Justice; no record by Papen of this conversation has been found.

## No. 496

RG/0346-51

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

RM No. 36

BERLIN, June 8, 1939.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER AND HAMDİ ARPAG, THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR, ON JUNE 8, 1939

The Reich Foreign Minister began by saying that during recent years Germany had always tried to conduct a policy of sincere friendship and had indeed done so. She had demonstrated this not only by her [?political] actions but also by far-reaching economic support. In the political field, he had repeatedly told both the Ambassador and State Secretary Numan that there were no differences of opinion between Turkey and Germany. As to Italy, he had hoped that German-Turkish [*sic*] relations could also, through the Berlin-Rome Axis, only be strengthened; for he had discussed the Turkish question with Mussolini in Italy and the latter had made the unequivocal declaration that Italy had no claims on Turkey. This declaration had also been conveyed to Turkey. As for the fortification of the Dardanelles, it had been Germany's constant endeavour to take Turkey's desires into account. Reich Minister Funk's visit<sup>1</sup> should also be regarded as a further proof of Germany's sincere desire to maintain friendly relations with Turkey. He (the Reich Foreign Minister) had, since taking office, conducted, on behalf of the Führer, a steadfast policy of friendship and of strengthening German-Turkish relations. Beyond this he had also spoken to

<sup>1</sup> The Reich Minister of Economics had visited Turkey in Oct. 1938, when agreement in principle was reached on the grant of a credit of 150 million RM to Turkey. See vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 555 and 557.

Count Ciano in Milan on Turco-Italian relations.<sup>2</sup> The Turkish Ambassador in Rome had been informed of Italy's friendly attitude towards Turkey.<sup>3</sup> As further proof of Germany's interest in good relations with Turkey the Reich Foreign Minister referred to the sending of numerous German specialists to that country.

During State Secretary Numan's visit<sup>4</sup> the Montreux Convention had also been brought up. He (the Reich Foreign Minister) had proposed, at that time, that similar agreements should be concluded between Germany and Turkey. It could at any rate be said that Germany's denunciation of the Versailles Dictate had at least in no way aggravated the Dardanelles problem. Nevertheless, in spite of the friendly relations between the two countries, the talks already referred to had not led to any result.

The Reich Foreign Minister then turned to the Turkish press and drew attention to its persistently aggressive tone. Although the Foreign Ministry had remonstrated about this, the attacks had only ceased temporarily. Nevertheless Germany had deliberately overlooked such attacks and professed a policy of friendship towards Turkey.

The Reich Foreign Minister then went on to speak of the recent Anglo-Turkish Declaration<sup>5</sup> which showed Turkey's intention of entering into close treaty relations with Britain. As, however, Britain was at present pursuing a very aggressive policy, this amounted to an attempt to take part in the encirclement of Germany. In diplomatic circles in European capitals it was asserted that this decision could be traced back firstly to the occupation of Albania and secondly to Germany's allegedly aggressive attitude during the settlement of the Bohemian-Moravian affair. It was advanced as a further decisive reason, that the new German-Rumanian Economic Treaty had been forced on Rumania.<sup>6</sup> In Berlin they had, in addition, been particularly struck by the following: when the German Ambassador made enquiries at the Foreign Ministry in Ankara about the rumours on the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish negotiations, he received the reply that Turkey had no intention of abandoning her policy of neutrality.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore it had caused considerable surprise that no statement from Turkey about the conclusion of the negotiations had reached the Reich Foreign Minister. In view of Germany's perfectly clear and unswerving friendship for Turkey, this change of Turkish foreign policy could not but astonish Germany, all the more so because of the motives which were advanced to explain this change. Firstly, not once had Germany adopted a hostile attitude against Turkey. Secondly, Italy had only

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 341.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 317.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 548.

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 42.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 324.

recently, as already mentioned, expressed her desire for friendly relations with Turkey. The Ambassador was requested to bring these views of the Reich Foreign Minister to the notice of his Government.

On the future of German-Turkish relations he (the Reich Foreign Minister) was unable to say anything at present. Since Germany could not tell whether she was not soon to expect further surprises from Turkey, our attitude would depend on Turkey's further actions. Should Turkey, as appeared from the press and statements by politicians, be bent on pursuing an aggressive policy towards Germany, we would take note of this and act accordingly. In conclusion, the Reich Foreign Minister again expressed his regret that he, of all people, as special sponsor of German-Turkish friendship, should have to suffer such an unfriendly attitude on the part of Turkey and he particularly regretted the manner and form in which this had found expression.

In his reply the Turkish Ambassador dealt with some of the points raised by the Reich Foreign Minister. First he emphasized that the maintenance of good relations with Germany served the interests of both countries. The same view of foreign policy as that now expounded by the Reich Foreign Minister had also been expressed at the time in the conversation between State Secretary Numan and State Secretary von Weizsäcker.<sup>8</sup> However, an entirely new situation had been created by the occupation of Albania and Germany's advancing her "thesis of living space".

As to Reich Minister Funk's visit, it had been welcomed with great satisfaction and Parliament had ratified the German-Turkish economic Treaty.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless all this had nothing to do with politics.

The Ambassador then went on to speak of Turkish-Italian relations, saying that they were completely normal and referring in this connection to the Turco-Italian Non-Aggression Pact.<sup>10</sup> But Turkey had become somewhat sensitive for the following reasons:

- 1) the fortification of the Dodecanese,
- 2) the case of Albania already referred to,
- 3) the "thesis of living space".

In spite of a proposal drafted by Under State Secretary Gaus and a Turkish counter proposal, the German-Turkish negotiations on the Dardanelles question<sup>11</sup> had not led to any result, because, under the Montreux Agreements, it had not lain in Turkey's sole power to include Germany in these Agreements; on the contrary the consent of the other signatory Powers was required for this.

As for the Turkish newspapers, there was complete freedom of the press in Turkey. There was no form of censorship nor would this be

<sup>8</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 556.

<sup>9</sup> On May 9, 1939; see document No. 435.

<sup>10</sup> The Treaty of Neutrality, Conciliation and Judicial Settlement, signed in Rome, May 30, 1928. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 129, pp. 763-767.

<sup>11</sup> See vol. v of this Series, Chapter VII.

in keeping with the ideas of the Turkish Government. Moreover, it was only a matter of isolated press comment. It could in no wise be said that there was a united front against Germany. As to what the Reich Foreign Minister had said about unfriendly statements in the Turkish press not evoking a corresponding reply in Germany, he recognized this with gratitude. He knew nothing of Turkish newspaper statements insulting the Führer. On the contrary, the Ambassador repeatedly emphasized the great respect which the Führer enjoyed in Turkey. Here the Reich Foreign Minister interjected that he had only to call the competent official dealing with press matters to convince the Ambassador that during the last two years there had been statements in the Turkish press insulting the Führer. If the aggressive tone in the Turkish press did not cease, he would be unable to prevent the German press from replying and informing the German public of the development of German-Turkish relations during the last two years, up to the Anglo-Turkish Declaration. The Reich Foreign Minister further stressed that the alleged control of the German press did not exist, on the contrary the press was only given guidance.

The Turkish Ambassador reverted to the reasons for Turkey's attitude and stated several times that, apart from the reasons already given, there was only one other, namely Turkish security in the Mediterranean.

Summing up, the Ambassador then stated emphatically that Turkey was not planning any surprises but that, as was the case in Germany, the principles of her policy were solely and simply the independence and integrity of the country. Under the freedom accorded to the press on grounds of domestic policy, no form of aggressive front against Germany could be observed. He therefore hoped that press polemics which would create an *état irréparable* would be avoided. Moreover the Ambassador could state officially that the Anglo-Turkish Declaration was only designed to create a security front in the Mediterranean and in no way amounted to Turkish participation in encirclement, let alone an attack. Quite the contrary, it was an agreement directed not towards but against aggression.

The Reich Foreign Minister thereupon concluded the conversation.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> In a minute to Weizsäcker, dated June 9 (1625/388855-56), Kordt wrote: "The Foreign Minister requests that, in the telegram on his interview with the Turkish Ambassador yesterday to be sent to Ambassador von Papen, it should be expressly stated that the Foreign Minister expressed in sharp, at times brusque, terms Germany's surprise and indignation at the way Turkey had deserted to the camp of the encirclement Powers. In order to prevent misunderstanding, the Foreign Minister then, in the presence of an interpreter, made the statements in the memorandum [on the conversation] already drawn up. In conclusion, the Foreign Minister also expressed his surprise to the Turkish Ambassador that, according to certain information reaching us from Turkey, irresponsible reporting, apparently from Berlin, was poisoning our relations. The Foreign Minister feels that the Turkish Ambassador's arguments, which are already very well known, need not be transmitted to the German Embassy in Ankara." An account of this interview on these lines was sent to the German Embassy in Ankara, as guidance for language to be held, in telegram No. 138 of June 10 (1625/388857-60). The full record was sent by despatch on June 12 (7891/E571343).

## No. 497

1548/376203-21

*Unsigned Memorandum*FACT-FINDING VISIT TO BRITAIN (JUNE 1-8, 1939)<sup>1</sup>

The task entrusted to me by Counsellor Hewel was that I should use my connections as a former Rhodes Scholar in England to make a survey of the attitude there towards Germany. Conscious of the present hostility, I first went to stay at an hotel in London, let my acquaintances know by telephone and waited.

Lord and Lady Astor,<sup>2</sup> whose son, a fellow student of mine at Oxford, I now met again in London, invited me to their country house at Clivedon [*sic*]. There I learned that Lord Halifax, Lord Lothian,<sup>3</sup> Sir Thomas Inskip<sup>4</sup> and a number of other Government politicians had been invited for this weekend—a fortunate coincidence for me. Being the only German among some thirty guests, and supported only by my host, who is still as markedly Germanophile as ever, as well as by his like-minded son, I sensed that the general attitude towards me was one of unusual embarrassment. I decided, in accordance with my instructions, to go over to the attack at the first opportunity, in order thereby to make the attitude of both sides absolutely clear.

This opportunity arose already at dinner, when I found myself sitting next to Lord Lothian and opposite to Lord Halifax. At first Lady Astor with her aggressive and mocking manner made it rather difficult for me to gain a hearing, but I succeeded at last, and when the rest of the men gathered at our end of the table, after the ladies had left us, I was able, in about three hours, to put the German point of view clearly and unreservedly and to register the nature of the British reaction to it.

I started from the premise that a deep-seated bitterness and hostility towards British policy prevailed among the German people to-day and

<sup>1</sup> A shorter version of this memorandum (not printed, 1548/376227-33) is headed as by Adam von Trott zu Solz. A further memorandum (not printed, 1548/376224-26) summarizing the conclusions drawn from these conversations is signed by him and dated June 12, 1939. Both these documents are stamped "Submitted to the Führer". Trott zu Solz became a research assistant in the Foreign Ministry in June, 1940.

<sup>2</sup> Viscount Astor had been a Conservative M.P. for Plymouth from 1910 until 1919, when he entered the House of Lords; owner of *The Observer* newspaper; Chairman of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1935-1945. Lady Astor became Conservative M.P. for Lord Astor's old seat in Plymouth, 1919, being the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons.

<sup>3</sup> Liberal politician and Secretary to the Rhodes Trust. As Philip Kerr he had been Secretary to the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, 1918-1921; became British Ambassador in the United States, August 1939-December 1940.

<sup>4</sup> Conservative M.P. for Fareham Division of Hampshire, 1931-1939; Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, January-September 1939.

that—should it come to a conflict over Poland—the German people would rise as one man against Britain also. With her “guarantee” for Poland, Britain had again identified herself with a great wrong done to Germany at Versailles and had also, by the rest of her system of alliances, given new life to the conviction, born of bitter experience, that she would try everything to keep Germany down in future too. Everywhere—in South East Europe as in the Baltic States—Germany came up against British counter-manceuvres and the renewed attempt at an Anglo-Franco-Russian combination had awakened the old passionate reaction against *encirclement* in every patriotic German. The German people could not but regard this British policy as being directed at the foundations of their whole existence, and put their trust in their leaders that they would not lose the next war fought in defence of these foundations. My exposition, which was attentively followed, caused consternation and this at first prevented anyone replying by attacking Germany.

Lord Halifax, indeed, admitted that among the British people also there prevailed a definite emotional readiness for war but that they would fight only if “forced to do so by Germany”. Although they were ready to make the utmost sacrifices and would not shrink from a necessary war, nevertheless they were, even now, prepared to take any really reasonable peaceful way out.

After the Munich Conference, he had seen the way open for a new consolidation of Powers, in which Germany would have the preponderance in Central and South East Europe, a “not too unfriendly Spain and Italy” would leave unthreatened British positions in the Mediterranean and the Middle East, and with pacification in the Far East also becoming possible. After Munich his confidence in the sincerity of Germany’s desire for understanding had lessened, and after the occupation of Prague people in Britain had been asking in consternation “who is going to be attacked next?” It was only in sheer “self-defence” that he had then adopted the new policy of guarantees and alliances.

In reply I said that the dwindling of German confidence [in Britain] after Munich was to be attributed to the general and undisguised opposition to this Agreement among the British people and to the feverish rearmament psychosis in Britain which immediately succeeded it. In the light of these happenings, the Munich concessions could only have appeared to the German people as a reluctant yielding by the British in order to gain time for armaments which, for us, could only have an anti-German character. After the previous rejection of German proposals for limitation, this new armament fever in Britain had necessarily led our Führer to the conclusion that he must solve Germany’s vital problems without consulting Britain. If British confidence had only been finally shattered by our occupation of Prague, one should

not fail to realize that Britain's lack of understanding, her arrogance, and generally her fundamentally hostile attitude towards the resurgence of Germany, had long since shattered German confidence so thoroughly that the relentless policy of rearmament after Munich had irrevocably destroyed the new hopes which had just then arisen. In Germany, everyone today realized that our people must attain their vital rights without the help of Britain and now, if necessary, even *against* Britain.

Lord Astor remarked in reply that he and his friends had, even after Munich, advocated concrete concessions to Germany's right to live. He was convinced, and had repeatedly pointed out, that Germany had never, in the past, been accorded the position due to her as a great nation, and that she had no one to thank other than her present leaders for the change in this state of affairs. Hitler's greatness, which must be recognized, lay in the very fact that he had maintained Germany's real vital rights against all opposition from outside, and it would have been possible to uphold this just cause of his even in Britain as long as he had not "destroyed" the vital rights of another independent nation. By the occupation of Prague, Germany had deprived her friends in Britain of the weapon which would have enabled them to support us.

The British people unfortunately regarded Prague as a first step to further conquests of a similar nature. It was only because they felt that every further German step in this direction increased the threat of a violation of their own national integrity, that the British public began to take an interest, unexpected indeed, but now passionately alive, in the threat hanging over Poland. If he or his friends were still to try to defend German policy publicly in Britain they would be regarded as traitors and hounded down. For, by so doing, they would be defending, as they were now reproached for doing, the first steps in a German policy which must inevitably lead to the "destruction" of all Germany's neighbours and ultimately to the annihilation of Britain herself.

In reply to this, I said that I had had occasion to ascertain that those Britons who thought as soldiers, regarded Germany's disarming of Czecho-Slovakia as an obvious necessity—just as Britain would not tolerate a strongly armed Ireland, to say nothing of Wales, within her own defence area.

It was characteristic of the press campaign waged against us for years that every move by Germany was interpreted as being inspired by the most sinister long term plans.

The British public must necessarily regard every single step taken by the German leaders with suspicion as long as Britain's basic attitude towards Germany was guided by the misrepresentations of her press correspondents, and not by the great and sound fundamental course



of resurgent German life, which, in spite of the subsidiary phenomena inevitable in any revolutionary era, had clearly and confidently made its mark in the different spheres of our national existence. In Britain, with a few exceptions such as Lord Astor and his circle of friends, not even a beginning had been made to understand Germany properly. How then could Germany have counted on a real understanding from Britain in the solving of the Czech question? In fact Germany's neighbours had again and again, by the Versailles Dictate, by the whole post-war policy of the Powers, and by the recent attempts of British diplomacy, so restricted Germany's natural development—for which every German had within himself an elemental feeling derived from historical experience—that, in the end, the only way out left to us was the use of force. We had again reached this point in our relations with Britain. Thereupon Lord Lothian, who, it seems to me, has not yet gone over to the anti-German, Anglo-American camp, gave a turn to the conversation of the highest interest to us. The following is roughly the gist of his remarks:

He admitted that, within certain limits, the use of force and self-help had represented the only, and therefore legitimate, means for the Germans. The Western Powers had not succeeded in evolving from the post-war state of affairs an order which really conceded to Germany her vital rights. Germany had only been able to assert herself by unilateral actions; that this way out was inevitable for the German leaders could not be denied. In his personal opinion, this also held good for the military occupation and disarming of Czecho-Slovakia as being an unavoidable necessity for Germany in the long run. Thus far he was prepared to follow the German argument.

But he regarded the continuance of administrative measures of oppression and the "destruction" of the Czech nation as the decisive turning point, at which he, too, had felt obliged to fall into line unreservedly with the change in British public opinion. Germany, by this policy, was destroying the only basis on which a powerful development of German life would have been reconcilable in the long run with the continued existence of Europe. With this "liquidation" of an independent nation—going beyond the limits of strategic requirements warranted by her own vital rights—Germany had called forth the passionate opposition of all independent nations of the world, and not least of Great Britain. The use of force against the vital rights of other nations must inevitably turn the tide of national feeling in all countries against Germany. And this was also the real reason why the British people had become so deeply incensed against the Germans—only now had the decidedly anti-German feelings of hatred and violence, formerly confined to small groups, penetrated to the masses. Only now had the "man in the street" become convinced of the necessity, and possible imminence, of a struggle for the vital rights of independent

nations, hitherto preached only by isolated agitators. Although to some this might have appeared a mere pretext, had it not been for Germany's march through Belgium the ordinary man could not have been induced to fight in 1914. "Prague" had the same meaning for the mass of the British people; this explained the readiness for war and death of the average Briton, who was still today passionately peace-loving, a readiness which it was perhaps difficult for us to understand. Technically there might be gaps here and there, but morally the British people were prepared for the worst.

I consider this judgement in itself to be correct, and therefore contented myself with replying that, in any conflict which might break out now, the German people would stand absolutely united behind their Führer, with complete confidence in victory, and backed by the most complete technical preparations.

In a later private conversation with me, Lothian again reverted to the European situation which, in the general view, was inevitably drifting towards war. He asked me on no account to mention him as the originator of the idea that he was now about to unfold to me. In view of his mission to the United States and the present atmosphere there, L[othian] obviously wants to avoid the suspicion that he has not yet been converted from his idea of reconciliation with Germany. This idea was not a proposition which he felt himself entitled to make to Germany, but simply a way out by which, in his opinion, the German Chancellor could triumphantly point out to the world at the present moment its further line of development. He would be glad to hear the views of a German on this, but again asked me not to mention him publicly in this connection—because he had previously been reproached with intending to secure new victories for Hitler.

I should like to preface the following by stating that, in contrast to other British politicians (with the exception of Lord Astor), I felt that Lord Lothian had an instinctively correct appreciation of the greatness of our Führer. Unlike many others, he sees in him not a hostile threat but the founder of a Reich ("empire builder"<sup>5</sup>) like Cecil Rhodes, by whom Lothian's political development has been decisively influenced. At heart, therefore, Lothian still believes that a friendly basic relationship with Hitler's empire-building power would be the most beneficial for the British Empire. In other words, Lothian, in spite of very pronounced American foibles, has a feeling for the inner relationship of German and British claims to supremacy in the world, and still half believes that they can be reconciled in a constructive manner. In the circle of Astor, Halifax, Chamberlain, etc., he exercises very strong influence—since he is undoubtedly the cleverest and most supple politician among them—so that, in spite of Lothian's request

<sup>5</sup> In English in the original.

for secrecy, the idea he communicated to me must naturally be included in this report as being of political importance. However, I urgently request that Lothian's name should not be allowed to reach the public in this connection, because, in that event, he would make no more confidential statements to me. What he told me was approximately as follows:

He started from the assumption that at the present moment Hitler was engaged in consolidating his Reich in Europe. He had already pointed out that, in his own personal opinion, the strategic elimination of Czechia had also been absolutely necessary for this. The Czech nation was today surrounded by Germany on nearly all sides; the national-political [*reichspolitische*] need to continue a struggle against the Czechs therefore no longer existed. Any attempt by Western European Powers to find military or political bases there against Germany was now finally barred. If, in these circumstances, it was within the bounds of possibility for the Führer to give Bohemia and Moravia their full national independence back again, on condition of an effective limitation of their armaments and economic cooperation with Germany, such an action would, in his view, have a revolutionary effect on British public opinion, and consequently on the freedom of action of the British Government and on world opinion in general. Hitler would, with one blow, disarm his bitterest enemies abroad, restore confidence in Europe, and thereby lend to the British desire for understanding, which was still honestly felt, a unanimity it had never before known. On this basis he thought that the gradual elimination of all moral and material differences still existing between Germany and Britain was possible.

Economically the German living space would naturally have to extend far beyond the present limits. But, if recognition of the national identity of the small Czech people, surrounded by Germany, could actually be made an undisputable and demonstrable reality, it would seemingly guarantee in European politics the possibility of reconciling the expansion of German power with the continued existence of the individuality of other nations. On this assumption he was firmly convinced that nothing would any longer stand in the way of the splendid rise of Germany in the world.

Danzig and the Polish question would find an obvious solution as soon as the Poles no longer had the slightest justification for asserting that increased economic and geographic [*wirtschaftsgeographische*] dependence on Germany was equivalent to national subjection to her.

Any further British distrust of, and obstruction to, German economic expansion in the South East would then of course have to stop. If Germany led, but did not dominate, Central and Eastern Europe, the Western European nations could then feel reassured about their

political independence. England-America (which Lothian naturally likes to regard as one!) and Germany, as the only real Great Powers, could then jointly shape and guarantee the future of world politics.

This picture of the future had occupied his mind after his conversations with the Führer, and he still could not believe that it was finally impossible. By one single demonstrative act, Hitler could today move the minds of men hopefully in this direction, in place of the fear of war which prevails everywhere, and, at the same time, solve the remaining problems of safeguarding and developing German living space. By the way in which Hitler fashioned anew the national life of Bohemia and Moravia, he could draw under his spell the feeling of all Europe, paralyse his enemies, and lay the foundation for Anglo-German agreements [*Ausgleichsabkommen*] on the largest scale. He repeated this idea in various ways, and then asked me whether I thought that there were any insurmountable obstacles to its realization.

I replied that the first feeling that I, as a German, had had when listening to him had been that it was actually up to Britain, being less confined, to restore confidence by a generous gesture—perhaps in the colonial question. The Czech problem was particularly difficult because of its ethnic political intricacy [*volkspolitische Verschränktheit*]. Prague was an old German city which could not just be given away again. Also, the atmosphere for generous treatment of the Czech national problem was too heavily laden through the recent severe distress and oppression of the Germans. The Czechs' Germanophobia would break out again in every general European situation unfavourable to us, so that, over and above strategic encirclement by Germany, a certain measure of administrative control would continue to be necessary.

Moreover, the Führer had repeatedly expressed recognition in principle of Czech nationality. Because the remnants of an attitude wholly intolerable to Germany continued to flourish there, the autonomy of Czech administration could, for the time being, be only partially realized. However, a policy directed towards this end corresponded entirely to Adolf Hitler's fundamental conceptions, as I knew from men in his immediate entourage, and as should also be generally known from his speeches. Precisely in this respect the Führer really had a better claim to be trusted than had world opinion and the British people, in their turn, to be given tangible demonstrations.

Thereupon Lord Lothian added the following:

Your Führer today holds the initiative; if he succeeds in establishing once for all the principle of the inviolability of weaker nations by a concrete act—extending beyond the sphere of declarations and pacts—then Europe can no longer deny his claim to leadership, nor can England-America any longer refuse the most far-reaching cooperation. Besides,

Hitler holds in his hands the shaping of opinion in the whole Anglo-Saxon world, to a greater extent perhaps than is understood in Berlin. Where today the courage of despair rises up against him, gratitude towards him could prevail tomorrow. After the conclusion of the Munich Agreement, public opinion in Britain was divided and unreliable; the disarming and occupying of Czecho-Slovakia aroused unanimous opposition; a new settlement might, in his opinion, guide it, in unprecedented unanimity, into more positive channels. In spite of the obvious difficulties which I had emphasized, it seemed to him that the gain from such a step would be greater than the loss.

The feelings of humiliation and of being threatened, rising to the courage of despair, have, according to the observations of practically everybody I asked, taken so firm a hold on the British people that in the event of war they are ready to fight. Lord Lothian made these feelings the real starting point for his reflections. From our point of view, however, the step envisaged by him would really only complete the humiliation of Britain. For the more demonstratively Germany makes respect for foreign nationalities in Eastern Europe part of her political programme, the more clearly will any claim to protectorship [*Schirmherrschaftsanspruch*], hitherto assumed by Britain, pass to Germany.

In my opinion, Lord Lothian and his friends are genuinely prepared to concede to Germany this claim and a free hand economically in Eastern Europe, but they believe they cannot do this until, by a demonstrative act, we have restored their position in the eyes of British public opinion, and have, by a recognition of the principle of nationality, destroyed the latter's feeling of Britain herself being threatened.

From the conversations at Clivedon I gathered that, important though Lord Lothian's voice is in influencing the Cabinet, Chamberlain still has the decisive say, in spite of criticism of a certain obstinacy and narrowmindedness of his. It was thus fortunate that I was also able to have a conversation with the Prime Minister himself on Wednesday (June 8). The Astors have access to him at any time, so that the meeting came about quite naturally. Nevertheless I emphasized to him that I was in England in an absolutely private capacity, but that I would be glad to explain to him the feelings of an average German, in which role I stood before him.

To this he said that the average German was not totally unknown to him, because of the many letters which he received from him. Immediately after Munich he had received grateful and enthusiastic communications from Germany, but now there arrived nothing except bitter accusations, reproaching him for wishing to encircle Germany.

I answered that, as far as he personally was concerned, his three flights to Germany and his honest efforts to bring about an understanding had not been forgotten, but that, after his return, he had seemingly been driven further and further away from his policy of

coming to an understanding, and had devoted himself first to rearmament directed against Germany and then to the encirclement of Germany.

And now we could not help feeling that every friendly act by Britain towards us had as its only object the gaining of time, in order to fight us more successfully later.

I repeated what I had told Lord Halifax, especially about the "guarantee" of Poland and the bitterness towards Britain which this step had created among the German people.

He said, and here I quote: "Do you believe that I enter into these obligations gladly? Herr Hitler forces me to it." We had forced Britain on to the defensive by the occupation of Czechia, and now the British people regarded every concession as a capitulation to an aggressor, caused by weakness.

I explained to him that the German people could not see how Britain could feel herself attacked to the east of Germany, and how, for that reason, the measures of British policy taken there were felt by us all to be an actual attack on German living space. In our opinion, these measures were the result of the British feeling that a renewed conflict between our two nations was inevitable. The old mistrust of Britain of the pre- and post-war period had been fully reawakened in us by this encirclement policy, and the German people were prepared and armed for the defence of their vital rights.

Mr. Chamberlain said—he spoke in great excitement at this point—that the British people too were "passionately stirred"<sup>5</sup> and that they would fight if another independent nation were "destroyed". He had tried again and again after Munich to prevent the development of such a crisis. But his efforts had been rejected by Germany. He was not personally embittered by German statements against Britain, but they did make it impossible for him to make new suggestions for ways to arrive at an understanding.

Basically he still desired a peaceful settlement with Germany. From the day he had taken up office he had stood for the view that the European problem could only be solved on the line Berlin-London. As opposed to this his present measures, this is approximately how he expressed himself, were an emergency aid, the compatibility of which with a German-British settlement he tried constantly to keep in mind.

The moot point between Britain and us today lay in that at Prague Germany had gone over to the "destruction" of other nations and that thereby all Germany's neighbours were forced into a kind of self-defence psychosis. If Germany could restore confidence in this respect he would again be able to advocate a policy of coming to meet us half-way [*Politik des aktiven Entgegenkommens*], as he had hoped to do after Munich.

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<sup>5</sup> In English in the original.

I repeated my argument that in the light of bitter experiences German confidence had been shaken far more deeply by the present attempt at encirclement. This would have to be discontinued. And then I asked him in what manner he could envisage the rebuilding of general confidence. British mistrust, as he had explained, was based on the alleged "destruction" of other nations by Germany. If Germany could furnish proof that she respected other people's national identity [*Volkstum*] more effectively than her own minorities were being respected, would Britain then in her turn help to remove German distrust by coming to meet us halfway in a generous and practical manner [*durch ein grosszügiges und praktisches Entgegenkommen*]?

Mr. Chamberlain replied that he personally tended to regard such proof as practically impossible, but that, if furnished, it would have to be taken very seriously in Britain, and would also restore to the British Cabinet a public platform for [their policy towards] Germany. Popular distrust of Germany's policy, generally believed to be one of conquest, was for the time being insurmountable, but once this had been removed he would again be able to advocate concessions.

Thereafter I was able to engage Lord Dunglase<sup>6</sup> [*sic*], a private secretary to Mr. Chamberlain, in conversation. During it he promised to influence Oliver Stanley, the President of the Board of Trade, in the sense of my statements noted above, with the result that, on the day after the speeches by Halifax and Chamberlain, Stanley also spoke in Parliament in favour of a more practically accommodating attitude [*konkreteres Entgegenkommen*] towards Germany. I enclose as an annex a memorandum, handed to me by the brother of Lord Dunglase [*sic*] influenced by my conversation with Halifax in Clivedon. It is at any rate interesting that such positive views are to be found in the immediate entourage of the Prime Minister.

I had the impression that a really generous solution in the future would occur less readily to Mr. Chamberlain than to Halifax or Lothian, but that, once visualized and clarified, he would defend it with courage and tenacity against any possible opposition. He stated to me that the small group of Conservatives who are rebelling against him—Eden, Churchill, Duff Cooper<sup>7</sup>—could be completely ignored, and that because of his large majority he need not pay any great attention to the Opposition. From a Parliamentary point of view Chamberlain is indeed in a very strong position—but the unity of his following, at least in matters of foreign policy, has arisen only through the steady German refusal of all the halfhearted and insincere bases for understanding in Britain. And it was only because Chamberlain, in the part of rejected lover, in the end switched to a different political line, that is only

<sup>6</sup> Lord Dunglase, Conservative M.P. for South Lanark.

<sup>7</sup> British Conservative M.P.; he had resigned office as First Lord of the Admiralty over the Munich Agreement.

because of German pressure, that he again became the undisputed leader of a public opinion, against which there is indeed at present no effective opposition.

The Führer's clear-sighted refusal of any halfhearted understanding with Britain has now, in view of a threatened total conflict, caused a far more genuine revival of the desire for a total understanding as the only alternative to war. Because of the expectation of war at any moment which for months has been weighing on the British population, and also because of the more recent readiness for war, the present moment is perhaps peculiarly suited for a German-British settlement [*Ausgleich*], radically removing past causes of friction [*alles Vergangene radikal bereinigende*]. Naturally Britain's difficulties in achieving a Russian alliance are an important factor in this. According to my instructions, I especially emphasized that Germany would be unconcerned even if such an unnatural alliance were concluded, for Russia would never be able to fight beyond her frontiers because of her internal instability.

But these eastern agreements are of interest to Britain only in the event of war. To prevent war, she is today probably prepared to make concessions, which are likely to be all the greater, the less firmly settled these unwillingly entered upon eastern insurances are.

The state of British public opinion, as it transpires from the discussions described above, was confirmed for me by many other conversations and impressions.

In London I also spent some time with Mr. Geoffrey Dawson<sup>8</sup> and Mr. Garvin,<sup>9</sup> the editors of *The Times* and *The Observer*. While the latter, deeply depressed and pessimistic, let it be understood that it was better to end an honourable history of 800 years with a desperate struggle, rather than "allow oneself to be kicked around like a fool and a coward" (Garvin evidently believes war with Germany to be inevitable)—Mr. Dawson stated that he would gladly receive any constructive suggestion for his press policy. Both, however, agreed that for the time being it was impossible to advocate actively Germany's cause, without calling forth a storm of indignation.

Another younger and intelligent journalist hit the nail on the head, when, in reply to my question on the state of public opinion, he said: You know, British public opinion is really made by Adolf Hitler.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Editor of *The Times*, 1932-1941.

<sup>9</sup> Editor of *The Observer*, 1908-1942.

<sup>10</sup> Among other German visitors to Britain from May to July, 1939, who wrote reports on their impressions, were Prince Max zu Hohenlohe-Langenburg, and Staatsrat Dr. Burchard-Motz of the Hamburg German-English Society. Prince Hohenlohe's three memoranda relate to visits from May 2-3 (not printed, 1504/371103-05), from June 10-14 (not printed, 1504/371087-88) and from July 15-21 (not printed, 1504/371081-86); the one by Dr. Motz to a visit from June 5-14 (not printed, 2781/537100-02).



[ Enclosure ]

CLIVEDON, TAPLOW.  
Saturday, June 3, 1939.

The democracies say: We will not make any concessions until you put away your pistols!

The dictators reply: We will not put away our pistols until you make concessions!

The democracies, remembering Czecho-Slovakia and Albania, say: How can we know whether you will put away your pistols after we have made concessions?

The dictators, remembering the Versailles Treaty and France's broken promise, reply: How can we know whether you will make concessions after we have put away our pistols?

The result is an *impasse*. Consequently, the democracies and dictators are sitting back and waiting for a sign. The dictators, dissatisfied and therefore impatient, are waiting for concessions to be granted. The democracies, satiated and therefore content, are waiting for the pistols to be put away.

Here is the vital point:

The democracies are making the pistols an issue. That is wrong. The pistols are of secondary importance. The dictators, however, are making the concessions an issue. That is right. The concessions, or their non-existence, are the reason for the pistols.—There can be no agreement on the question of pistols. Pistols speak only to pistols and their language is war. Therefore drop the pistols.

But there is already agreement that concessions will be made one day—

Let today be that day!

## No. 498

F6/0343-45

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII*

RM 37

BERLIN, June 20,<sup>1</sup> 1939.  
Pol. VII [1068].<sup>2</sup>

On Thursday, June 8, the Foreign Minister received the Special Envoy, Khalid Al Hud, Royal Counsellor of Ibn Saud.<sup>3</sup> The conversation began with the Foreign Minister expounding to the Envoy our attitude towards the Arab world, an attitude imbued with a warm

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from another copy (1605/385610-12).

<sup>3</sup> See also documents Nos. 313 and 422.

feeling of general sympathy and which might well be reciprocated, since Germany, from her whole geographical and political situation, could not have any interests of power politics in Arabia. Furthermore, we were linked by common aims and a common foe in the shape of Jewry. Khalid Al Hud eagerly confirmed the Minister's view and added that his Sovereign had always attached the greatest importance to entering into relations with Germany and was therefore very grateful that the Minister, Dr Grobba, had been sent. Doubtless there would soon be numerous close connections between Germany and his own country.

The Foreign Minister then asked the Envoy about his King's relationship with Britain. Khalid Al Hud stressed the natural hostility resulting from the constriction of Arab living space by Britain, but stated that one had to be exceedingly cautious because his country was not more developed in military respects, and could not attack so strong an enemy with any prospect of success. In reply to questions by the Minister, he represented relations with Italy as entirely correct, while he described those with Turkey as bad. The King, in particular, had been an old and bitter enemy of the Turks from his youth upwards and had remained so to the present day.

As to his desires, Khalid Al Hud declared that these were modest. He was anxious systematically to build up an armed force independent of Britain, and in view of what had happened in Palestine, also to become independent of the supply of munitions from other countries. Therefore he attached special importance to rifles and a small munitions factory. Armoured cars and anti-aircraft guns were what they wished to receive next.

The Foreign Minister referred the Counsellor to me for details of negotiations in this field, where he had promised our assistance in principle, and ended the conversation with the sincere wish for favourable collaboration.

Khalid Al Hud was very satisfied with the conversation and immediately reported on it by telegraph to his King.

VON HENTIG

### No. 499

103/111407

#### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

Moscow, June 9, 1939—9:29 p.m.

No. 93 of June 9

Received June 9—11:15 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 86 of June 2.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 465.

Mikoyan informed Hilger last night that the Soviet Government had agreed to the despatch of Schnurre to Moscow on condition that we accepted in substance the latest Soviet proposal of February.<sup>2</sup>

The possibility of further negotiations therefore requires considerable study. I think it necessary that Hilger should accompany me tomorrow to Berlin to make an oral report.<sup>3</sup>

SCHULENBURG<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 490 and 491.

<sup>3</sup> Before the telegram here printed was despatched, Hilger had, according to a minute of June 9 (103/111405), telephoned Schnurre from Moscow requesting permission to come to Berlin to make an oral report on a conversation which he had had the previous day, as this could not be transmitted by telegram or despatch. Permission was refused by Weizsäcker in telegram No. 114 of June 9 to Moscow (103/111406) but on June 11, in telegram No. 118 to Moscow (103/111409), Hilger was instructed to come at once to Berlin. The Moscow Embassy replied in telegram No. 95 of June 12 (not printed, 103/111414) that Hilger would arrive in Berlin on June 14. On June 15, in telegram No. 123 to Moscow (not printed, 695/260404), Schnurre announced that Hilger would be back in Moscow on June 17, and instructed the Embassy there to arrange an appointment for him with Mikoyan.

<sup>4</sup> Schulenburg announced his departure from Moscow on June 10 in telegram No. 94 (not printed, 103/111408). An undated note in his handwriting (276/178370/2) states that he was in Berlin from June 12-24. See also document No. 540, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 201.

## No. 500

585/242431

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Bulgaria*

#### Telegram

No. 104

BERLIN, June 9, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Pol. IV.

The visit of the Bulgarian Minister President to Berlin I shall revert to in another communication.<sup>2</sup>

On the question of arms deliveries, again raised in your telegram No. 70,<sup>3</sup> special instructions follow.<sup>4</sup> In conversations on this subject you are requested also to raise, in appropriate form, the question of Bulgaria's services in return for the political support implied in these deliveries, that is by way of a Bulgarian *rapprochement* to the Axis Powers (despatch of June 5—Pol. IV 3453).<sup>5</sup> On this occasion please also mention the subject of Bulgaria's accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact. Without a direct request that Bulgaria should accede, please put the question clearly as to whether she would be prepared to do so.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not found, but in a memorandum of June 26 (not printed, 585/242439), Steengracht recorded a telephone communication from the Legation at Sofia that the Bulgarian Minister President had accepted an invitation to visit Berlin, July 5-7.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 480.

<sup>4</sup> Not found, but see document No. 566.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 476.

## No. 501

1818/415536-30

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2370

PARIS, June 9, 1939.

Received June 12.

Pol. V 5285.

With reference to reports Nos. A 1774 of May 4, A 1885 of May 9, and A 1891 of May 11.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Conversation between an Embassy informant and Marcel Déat.<sup>2</sup>

I have the honour to submit herewith a memorandum prepared by an Embassy informant of a conversation with the Deputy Marcel Déat.

The ideas which Déat expounded, especially the view that Germany's aspirations in Eastern Europe could be realized by peaceful means—not now, but after a certain quiet “period of waiting”—are widely held here and have often been very frankly expressed by Frenchmen in conversation with members of the Embassy.

H. WELCZECK

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1818/415380-81; 1818/415385-86 and 1818/415414-17). These reports reviewed articles in the French press on the Danzig question, especially by Déat and Flandin. The report of May 4 drew particular attention to an article by Déat, in *L'Oeuvre* of May 4, entitled *Mourir pour Danzig?*

<sup>2</sup> French Deputy and former Minister for Air, leader of the Neo-Socialists (Parti Socialiste de France).

[Enclosure]

PARIS, June 2, 1939.

## CONVERSATION WITH MARCEL DÉAT ON JUNE 2, 1939

Marcel Déat shares in the main Flandin's view that military action by Germany in the Danzig question would lead to a general conflict, and that Britain and France would feel compelled in that event to intervene with their armies on behalf of Poland. Although the Deputy is convinced that 80 per cent of all Frenchmen would go to war for the Poles with the utmost reluctance, the activities of the warmongers in London, Paris and other capitals had assumed such proportions that a future world war would be unleashed regardless of the mental resistance of the mass of the population. The bellicose group in Britain had the upper hand today and the French Government found themselves constrained to follow them. The group took their stand on the argument of German dynamism and on the conviction that the Reich was striving for European hegemony.

If the view were held in the German Government and General Staff that Britain and France were not prepared to accept the responsibility and consequences of a general conflict for so insignificant

a problem as the Danzig question, this was fundamentally mistaken. It should likewise be borne in mind that all plans for the future and all hopes of a strategic kind were futile, because as past experience had shown, the actual developments in war bore no relation whatever to previous calculations.

Déat hinted, during this conversation, that he personally would be prepared to combat war psychosis, and fatalism towards war. However, he would have to be convinced by Germany's future attitude that the Reich did not intend to settle the Danzig problem at all costs in a few months' time. The chief danger and the main reason for the present anxiety lay in uncertainty about German aims. The Deputy was convinced that the German Government could contribute immediately to a sensible easement of tension by informing the public at large—either through their policy or through an official declaration—of their desire to solve the Danzig question peacefully. If a prominent figure in the Reich were once more precisely to define in public the proposals which Reich Chancellor Hitler propounded on April 28<sup>3</sup> and bring them into discussion in the world press, the peoples would, to some extent, be freed from the nightmare of uncertainty and the discussion could develop in a better atmosphere, and one more favourable to Germany. The decisive advantage for Germany, however, would be that French personages who had understanding for the economic and political interests of the Reich would be able, and morally entitled, to stand up firmly for their point of view and so weaken the bellicose front. Déat could not understand why Germany, having waited twenty years for a solution of the Danzig problem, wanted today, in the worst atmosphere conceivable, to make this a question which must, in any circumstances, be settled within a period of a few months. Had Reich Chancellor Hitler annexed Danzig before the occupation of Bohemia and Moravia no conflict would have arisen over it; the international resistance front had not then been organized and world opinion would have treated this problem for what it was worth in the international sphere, namely as a problem of secondary importance which would in no way constitute a serious alteration of the statute [*sic ?* status] in Europe. Today, however, the Danzig question was considered and judged under quite a different aspect. Were Germany to wait six months or a year for a definite solution, and, at the same time, during that period to contribute actively towards easing the international tension, there would then be no doubt that a final solution as desired by Berlin would be possible. Those circles in France who were working for collaboration with the German Reich could, during that period, exercise a decisive influence on public opinion in order to put the warmongers in their place. It would not be difficult for the friends of peace

<sup>3</sup> To the Reichstag; see Editors' Note on p. 355.

to win over those determined pacifists who are to be found in all parties to such an extent that their influence would decide the attitude of the French Government.

Deputy Déat is convinced that the real interests of the German Reich lie in consolidating the Eastern and South Eastern problems. The aims which Germany had set herself in the East and South East and of [sic ? on] the Continent were so numerous that they could not be realized in a few months. Berlin could gain quite an enormous increase of power, if it directed its main attention to securing its economic, and thereby its political, influence, in the Central European and Balkan States. The solution of the Danzig problem could then take place automatically, so to speak.

### No. 502

533/239067-69

*Ambassador Bergen to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

[Copy]

ROME, June 9, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

DEAR HERR REICH MINISTER :

The private audience granted to my wife and myself yesterday—at which by my request I was first received alone—gave me the opportunity to speak in accordance with your instructions.<sup>2</sup> The Pope was so interested, and so delighted, at the possibility of paving the way for friendly relations between us and the Curia, that he prolonged our conversation again and again, and kept the Spanish Minister, Serrano Suñer, and the delegation of Spanish legionaries waiting for more than half an hour.

The conversation touched on this and that. I spoke on the following lines: The Pope's pronouncements, various gestures, the conveyance of his congratulations on the occasion of the Führer's fiftieth birthday, the address to German pilgrims of which you are informed,<sup>3</sup> etc., had given us the impression and aroused the hope that a new epoch had dawned for German-Vatican relations. In your view it was quite

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "The original of this letter has been given to the Foreign Minister, 15/6. Br[ückemeier]." The original has not been found. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Not found; but see document No. 395 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 41 of Apr. 25 (not printed, 533/239027) Bergen had reported that, according to some of those present, the Pope had spoken to a group of German pilgrims in the following terms: "We have always loved Germany, where We were able to spend many years of Our life, and We love Germany even more today. We rejoice in Germany's greatness, rise, and wellbeing and it would be false to assert that We do not desire a flourishing, great and strong Germany. For this very reason, however, we desire that the rights of God and the Church be always recognized, for every greatness is the more firmly established the more these rights are esteemed and made the foundation for the edifice."

possible for Church and State to dwell peacefully together within the same confines. Should the Vatican's endeavours be thus directed, you would be favourably disposed towards them. In response to your request for proposals, I had characterized as of prime importance the elimination of the present mutual mistrust and the gradual creation of confidence. The *détente*, which was already perceptible, would have to be promoted and a press truce could contribute considerably to this. If the atmosphere were cleared, then a private non-committal exchange of views could perhaps first be entered upon, and this, if favourable, could be followed by more detailed talks and possibly negotiations. You had authorized these suggestions in principle, but attached decisive importance to secrecy; indiscretions could set everything back by five to ten years; any indiscreet reports would be most decidedly denied.

The Pope requested me to inform you that he would always be ready to pave the way for relations of friendship with Germany, a country very dear to him, as he has often emphasized already. We may rest assured of the discretion of the Curia. He would welcome it if, pending the final general settlement, further "harsh measures" could be avoided. (He was obviously thinking primarily of Austria [*Ostmark*].) The Pope, like you, apparently had in mind some kind of public peace [*Burgfriede*] for the interim period. The Pope expressed concern about the international situation without going into details.

My audience caused Minister Serrano Suñer, at a reception in the afternoon at the Spanish Embassy, to make pressing enquiries about the state of our relations with the Vatican and about the prospects for a *détente*.

As Cardinal Secretary of State Maglione informed me, the British Government have let it be known here that they are trying to urge moderation on the Polish Government.<sup>4</sup> The Cardinal hereupon remarked that no group of Powers wanted war, but the tremendous universal mistrust constituted a grave danger to peace.

With my best regards and

Heil Hitler,

I remain,

Yours etc.,

VON BERGEN

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<sup>4</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 32.

## No. 503

3039/600560

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 178 of June 10

BUDAPEST, June 10, 1939—8:34 p.m.

Received June 11—1:10 a.m.

Pol. IV 3558.

The Foreign Minister told me that the Yugoslav Deputy Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> had proposed, via the Hungarian Minister in Belgrade,<sup>2</sup> the conclusion of an agreement between Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungary, through the mediation, and the subsequent adherence, of Turkey. Greek participation had not been envisaged out of consideration for Italy. The Yugoslav Government would, if Hungary agreed, exert pressure on the Rumanian Government to conclude a minorities agreement with Hungary. Should Rumania refuse, the agreement could be concluded without her, since in any case Yugoslavia, as a result of Rumania's strained relations with Bulgaria and Hungary, was finding the burden of her ties with Rumania increasingly irksome.

Csáky, out of consideration for the Axis Powers, intends not to entertain the proposal and to treat it in a dilatory manner. The Hungarian Minister in Belgrade is therefore not to return to his post before July.

Csáky has instructed the Hungarian Minister in Ankara<sup>3</sup> to ask for Turkish mediation—which he knows holds no prospects—in Hungarian revisionist claims on Rumania. By this move he desires to lend support to the Rumanian thesis that Rumanian concessions to Bulgaria would constitute a dangerous precedent in view of Hungary's claims, and thus to prevent Bulgaria's accession to the Balkan Pact and her defection to the Western Powers.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Miloje Smiljanić, Director of the Political Department in the Yugoslav Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and acting Deputy Foreign Minister.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Bakách-Bessenyei.

<sup>3</sup> Zoltán de Máriássy.



## No. 504

1625/388361

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 258 of June 10

BUCHAREST, June 10, 1939—10:10 p.m.

Received June 11—1:10 a.m.

Pol. II 2019.

With reference to your telegram No. 224 of June 7,<sup>1</sup>

Your instructions have been carried out. Gafencu said that he firmly adhered to the view he had held up to now, that the Anglo-Turkish agreement must in no way refer to the Balkans, as he had agreed with Cincar-Marković.<sup>2</sup> He did not believe that there would be any further defection by Turkey; he rather hoped that the scope of the proposed final agreement would be confined to the case of an attack in the Eastern Mediterranean. He no longer saw any possibility of Turkey completely abandoning the policy she had adopted, for the appearance of Italy in the Balkans had been extremely disquieting to Turkey. He, too, considered the invasion of Albania a mistake. I naturally contradicted this.

A conversation before a dinner at my house, given in honour of the Reich Youth Leader,<sup>3</sup> and at which Gafencu was present, having declined an invitation to a dinner in honour of Crown Prince Paul,<sup>4</sup> was followed by a discussion with the Italian Minister<sup>5</sup> who was also present, and whose impression was: Rumania will continue in her present attitude, but there is still no promise from Turkey to confine the Anglo-Turkish agreement to the Mediterranean and not to include the Balkans. But he too believes in Gafencu's sincerity.

Gafencu left last night for Ankara and Athens and will be back about June 20.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 488.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 428.

<sup>3</sup> Baldur von Schirach.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably Crown Prince Paul of Greece.

<sup>5</sup> Pellegrino Ghigi.

## No. 505

583/242090-100

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

ROME, June 10, 1939—10:35 p.m.

No. 247 of June 10

Received June 11—4:05 a.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 219 of May 30.<sup>1</sup>

Count Ciano asked me to call on him this evening, in order to inform me about the day before yesterday's visit of the British Ambassador<sup>2</sup> who had brought him the British Government's reply to Mussolini's question whether the British Government still attached value, and if so what, to the Italo-British agreements of April, 1938. The Ambassador had based his oral communications on a memorandum, which he left with Count Ciano. The latter has furnished me with a copy<sup>3</sup> which goes off to Berlin tomorrow evening by as safe hand as available. The substance is as follows:

1) The British Government are surprised at the question. They desire, in the future as in the past, to interpret the Agreement of 1938 loyally, both in spirit and in letter, and they see no reason for not regarding it for many years to come as the "keystone" of Anglo-Italian relations, provided the Italian Government are of like mind.

2) The surprise of the British Government is all the greater in that they give proof for their adherence to the Agreement in their attitude towards the occupation of Albania, which they could have interpreted as affecting the *status quo* in the Mediterranean—a basic principle of the Agreement.

3) Dissenting from Mussolini, Halifax asserts that the line of British policy has not changed. The assurances given to certain third parties in view of the events in Albania and Czecho-Slovakia change nothing in the course of British policy, which, in accordance with the Agreement, is directed towards peace and security.

4) Lord Perth,<sup>4</sup> in his farewell audience with Mussolini, and Mussolini in his speech at Turin<sup>5</sup> happily agree that difficulties can be settled without war. As emerges from the text of the British guarantee to Rumania and Greece and the Agreements with Poland and Turkey,

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 456.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Percy Loraine; see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Not found; but a copy of a cover note (not printed, 2130/463479) indicates that it was forwarded on June 10.

<sup>4</sup> Retiring British Ambassador.

<sup>5</sup> On May 14. The speech is published in *Scritti e Discorsi*, op. cit., vol. xii, pp. 184-189.

the only intention is to prevent aggression and thus to serve peace and security according to the spirit of the Agreement.

5) The British Government therefore take the view that the Agreement should serve as a basis for a lasting strengthening of relations between the two nations, and they hope that their view is shared by Mussolini.

Count Ciano described the reply as mere verbiage; he had confined himself to receiving it but had questioned the Ambassador as to the scope of the Anglo-Turkish treaty, in particular whether it applies only to the Mediterranean or also includes the Balkans. The Ambassador had reserved his reply in order to consult London.

MACKENSEN

## No. 506

100/84502-05

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

ROME, June 10, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: Ciano asked me to call on him this evening in order to inform me of the British Ambassador's reply to Mussolini's enquiry about the value which London still attached to last year's Anglo-Italian Agreements. I am reporting on this by telegram,<sup>1</sup> and by the same safe hand which carries this letter, am sending the British Ambassador's memorandum, a copy of which was given me by Ciano.<sup>2</sup>

In the course of the lengthy conversation which followed on this topic and which passed on to all sorts of other subjects—since Ciano was unusually outspoken—I had the welcome opportunity of pointing out to him that, in his toast at the Palazzo Venezia,<sup>3</sup> the Spanish Minister of the Interior had omitted to make any mention whatever of Germany's share in Franco's victory, a matter which I reported to you in my letter of yesterday.<sup>4</sup> I am very pleased that such a discussion took place, for, from what Ciano told me, I obtained the definite impression that there could not have been the remotest idea of any unfriendly intention on Suñer's part. Ciano, who, as you know, in his judgements of other people is rather on the reserved side, and hardly ever goes too far, at any rate in a positive sense, emphasized yet again what an extraordinarily favourable impression Suñer's personality had made on him. He really was an extremist for the Axis and according to the Duce's and Ciano's own judgement, was undoubtedly the strongest Axis prop in the Franco régime. Here he mentioned, in

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 505.

<sup>2</sup> Not found; see document No. 505, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 494.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 805.

passing, that Jordana,<sup>5</sup> for instance, was quite differently disposed and that he, as well as, unfortunately, the Spanish Ambassador here,<sup>6</sup> in his heart of hearts expected Spain's future happiness to come from the monarchy and therefore, as Ciano put it, from England and France. He added in strictest confidence that Suñer himself had told him that he had been so little edified by the unburdenings of the Spanish Ambassador on the stability of the Axis that he had "put him out" (which, however, is only to be understood figuratively for the present).

Ciano thought that if Suñer had, in fact, omitted to mention, in his toast, Germany's part in the Spanish Civil War—which incidentally he had not himself noticed—this could be explained first of all by the fact that Suñer had absolutely no foreign experience. Furthermore, he could tell me that the speech was only prepared at the very last moment. The Duce, who made speeches at dinners at the Palazzo Venezia only when personages from the rank of Minister President and upwards were concerned, had had no intention at all of speaking at this dinner. Suñer, however, had conveyed his desire to express his feelings for Italy in such terms that it would have been impossible to refuse him without hurting his feelings. The Duce had then announced his willingness to say a few words, and these had been composed at the last minute, after he had been shown a draft of Suñer's speech, which had just been sketched out and dictated extempore. Suñer himself had indeed only reluctantly set down in writing what he wanted to say, because he would really have preferred to speak on the spur of the moment "following the dictates of his own heart". Consequently, in the speech itself, he had perhaps not kept strictly to the draft submitted. On my remarking that I had actually intended to say a few words to the Spanish Ambassador this evening, about this lapse on the part of his Minister, Ciano said he thought it better to let the matter rest; there would indeed be no point in taking it up unless it were suspected of being deliberate. He could however guarantee that such was not the case. Besides, in view of the far from happy relations between the Ambassador and the Minister, he did not consider it opportune to bring a lapse on the part of his Minister to the attention of the Ambassador, of all people. In the circumstances I will give up my original intention and let the matter rest. I can do this all the more, as from what the Press Attaché tells me the German officers of the "Condor" legion present at the dinner and who, after all, might have been the first to resent the omission, had, in their admiration for Suñer whom they regard as the most convinced friend of Germany, not taken the slightest umbrage.

Ciano added that I should, nonetheless, report his opinion of this little

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<sup>5</sup> Vice President and Foreign Minister.

<sup>6</sup> Pedro Garcia Condo y Menendez.

incident to Berlin, if only lest it be brought to the notice of the Reich Foreign Minister by some one or other. Ciano added further, that, from his conversation with Suñer, he had clearly gathered that the latter would particularly welcome an official invitation to Germany in the near future; Ciano seemed very eager to arrange this for him. Suñer had, as a matter of fact, been to Nuremberg as the Führer's guest two years ago, but was then still an unknown quantity and merely a member of the suite of Franco's brother. Perhaps you could let me know at some time whether this suggestion of Ciano's would be well received in the proper quarters.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler,

-Yours etc.,

V. MACKENSEN

### No. 507

650/255793-94

#### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

No. 248 of June 11

ROME, June 11, 1939.

Received June 13—2:00 p.m.

Pol. III 2497.

The Spanish Minister of the Interior, Serrano Suñer, with whom I did not get beyond an exchange of courtesies and a short conversation of quite a general nature at the dinner given by Mussolini at the Palazzo Venezia,<sup>2</sup> sought me out, at yesterday evening's reception by the Spanish Ambassador, for a long private conversation. He spoke with visible satisfaction of his lengthy and impressive conversation with the Duce, who discussed questions of mutual interest with engaging frankness and admirable clarity. For him—Serrano—the foreign policy of the future Spain which would arise under Franco's guidance, was clearly mapped out; he was a deeply convinced advocate of Spanish collaboration with the Axis Powers. But precisely as such, and entertaining the desire that the *amicizia* would gradually become an *alleanza*, he could not close his eyes to the fact that a large number of Spaniards saw their salvation in leaning towards Britain and France. The French "gutter press" was doing all it could to supply grist to these people's mills and skilfully assembling everything that might be useful for propaganda against the Axis Powers, and it could not be denied that this propaganda was not without success. To counteract this propaganda effectively was particularly difficult when situations arose on the side of the Axis Powers which could be exploited easily and cheaply

<sup>1</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Sent by special courier to save expense."

<sup>2</sup> On June 7, 1939; see document No. 494.

by the propaganda of the "jackals" of the French press. The Duce too, with his clear and firm judgement of things, shared this view. It was far from his, Serrano's, mind to interfere in any way in the domestic concerns of others, and the question of religion and the Church was after all the concern of each individual country. On the other hand, however, it was only in accordance with the spirit of sincere friendship and mutual trust if, having in mind future collaboration and the common goal, frank expression were given to certain apprehensions. The fact was that Spain was an out and out Roman Catholic country, perhaps even more so after the experiences of the revolution than before. No Spanish statesman could ignore this. Nothing therefore could be more welcome to propaganda directed against Spanish collaboration with the Axis Powers, especially propaganda in the French press, than the chance to paint the Roman Catholic Church in the Reich as subjected to persecution, and to represent to the Spaniards, especially the broad unthinking masses of the people, the impossibility of seeking the country's salvation in keeping company with such friends. Recognizing this, any *détente* between the Reich and the Vatican—he was deliberately speaking only of the Roman Catholic Church—would, in view of the foreign policy of Franco's Government, be exceedingly welcome. Here he again cited the Duce as being of like mind, and he also mentioned his extensive conversation with the Pope, with whom, therefore, this subject would also appear to have been widely discussed.

In conclusion Serrano said that, immediately on his return, he would also speak to Herr von Stohrer in the same sense. Still under the impression of his conversation with the Duce, he had, however, considered it useful to mention these ideas to me as well. Whether by speaking in this way, Serrano was following a suggestion from the Duce, was not clear, but it cannot be ruled out in view of his repeated references to his talks with Mussolini; nor does such a suggestion appear improbable, for we know what a lively interest the Duce takes in a reduction of our differences with the Vatican, but he prefers to express this interest in roundabout ways.

MACKENSEN

## No. 508

555/242435-36

### *The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 74 of June 10

SOFIA, June 12, 1939—12:30 a.m.

Received June 12—6:25 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 104.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 500.

When I saw the Minister President today on another matter and subsequently mentioned supplies and Bulgarian services in return, and finally the Anti-Comintern Pact, he said that the question of Bulgaria's accession had never been broached officially. He had been all the more astonished to hear that Field Marshal Göring had told Draganov that Bulgaria had refused to accede.<sup>2</sup> When the matter had been raised unofficially in Berlin in February last,<sup>3</sup> he had at once informed the King, who was then in Italy, and who had asked Mussolini whether Bulgaria's accession were desired by the Axis Powers. Mussolini had answered that it was not, and had even said that accession would involve Bulgaria in risks. Thereupon the question had been pursued no further here. Without giving a clear answer to my question, the Minister President said that reserve was necessary: in the first place for fear that Bolshevik propaganda, which had died down at present, would be resumed with renewed vigour. In reply to my argument that the Government had only to use their power to combat (group missing) he maintained that it could always find an easy entry via the insufficiently protected Black Sea coast and, as experience had shown, could easily gain ground on account of the similarity of language. Secondly, Bulgaria's military position was too exposed as long as Yugoslavia's attitude was not clearly defined. It would be a great relief to Bulgaria if Yugoslavia denounced the Balkan Pact, which was warranted by Turkey's attitude. Instead, Gafencu in this morning's speech<sup>4</sup> had actually repeated the invitation to Bulgaria to join and had also stated that no Great Power would espouse the cause of Bulgaria's aspirations. He profoundly mistrusted Rumania; recently Gafencu had perfidiously told the Bulgarian Minister that the Dobruja question had been mentioned to him neither in Berlin nor in Rome, but had been in London and Paris. It had also come to his knowledge that recently the question of a partition of Bulgaria had actually again been discussed within the Balkan Entente. Most menacing at present were the Turks, who had latterly been using inflammatory language against Bulgaria in their press. In conclusion the Minister President assured me afresh of Bulgaria's unconditional loyalty to Germany.

Without the King who is the final authority, the Minister President could give no definite answer to my question. It may be that the more than pessimistic description of the Bulgarian situation given me by King Boris at my first audience<sup>5</sup> was intended to prevent any official *démarche* by us on this question; at all events after today's talk I have

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<sup>2</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. v of this Series, documents Nos. 301, 302 and 303.

<sup>4</sup> On June 9 to the Chamber. Fabricius sent a summary of this speech in despatch No. 2470 of June 12 (not printed, 3028/599604-06).

<sup>5</sup> On May 21; see document No. 415.

the impression that the accession could be achieved if Bulgaria were armed with all possible speed out of Czech arms stocks and if she were covered by Yugoslavia's denunciation of the Balkan Pact. I leave it to your discretion whether I should come to Berlin for discussions after June 19.

RICHTHOFEN

No. 509

53/35843-58

*Unsigned Memorandum*

RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CONFERENCE  
IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY (CHAMBER OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL)  
ON JUNE 12, 1939

For list of those present see Annex.<sup>1</sup>

Opened at 11:50 a.m.

On behalf of the Reich Foreign Minister, State Secretary von Weizsäcker welcomed the Heads of German Missions and the Hoheitsträger from Latin America. The Reich Foreign Minister, on whose initiative the Conference had been called, took the greatest interest in its proceedings and would probably take over the chairmanship personally in a day or two.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker then referred to the deterioration in relations between the Reich and the Latin American States which had set in a few months ago.<sup>2</sup> Things must not be allowed to slide, but we must work actively to restore the former good relations, which are of great importance to us. The Reich sought no quarrels, but was not evading them either and so we must see to it that all the pieces were correctly placed on the board should it come to a decision by other means. An optimum of our interests must be combined with a minimum of friction.

Among the various matters affecting our relations with Latin America, the question of the reorientation of the German community played a large part. The State Secretary proposed that the Conference should first discuss questions connected with the A[uslands] O[rganisation]. For today's session, he requested brief and clear reports from each representative. Here it was not a question of discussing questions of blame and the like, but of accepting the principle

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (53/35843-44). In addition to the Heads of Missions and the Hoheitsträger in Latin America, there were present Gauleiter Bohle, in his capacity as Head of the Auslandsorganisation, together with representatives of the AO, the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and the Foreign Ministry. The Heads of Missions had been summoned to this conference by Weizsäcker in a telegram of Apr. 21 (not printed, 53/35802).

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, chapter ix, *passim*.



that the representatives of the Foreign Ministry and the AO had come together as comrades pursuing entirely identical interests. Where our political relations were good, the German community profited and where the German community prospered, foreign policy reaped the benefit.

Ambassador von Thermann<sup>3</sup> began by asking the State Secretary to convey to the Reich Foreign Minister the thanks of the Heads of Missions for convening the meeting. He then continued as follows:

The deterioration in our relations with Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Guatemala was partly to be ascribed to the unjustified fears of the Governments concerned that the Reich was pursuing aims of power policy there. The German community in these countries was frequently adduced as an argument in support of this view.

Herr von Thermann spoke in detail on the relationship between Representatives of the Reich and Hoheitsträger. Gauleiter Bohle had already last year recognized the right of veto by the Representative of the Reich in all matters of the Party organizations affecting the foreign policy interests of the Reich. This power of veto should be extended to give the Reich Representative a right to be informed by the Hoheitsträger about measures proposed, and, in certain cases, the right to give directives to the Hoheitsträger.

Where the line of division came between the spheres of competence of the Head of a Mission and of the Hoheitsträger was not always clear. Broadly it should be laid down that the Reich Representative was competent for any official activity, while the task of the Party was the ideological guidance of the Reich Germans.

Difficulties were caused in several countries by the question of the *Volksdeutsche*, whose leadership was, in many cases, in the hands of Reich Germans. This aroused the mistrust of the Governments concerned. A clear distinction must be made between Reich Germans and *Volksdeutsche*; the latter were the responsibility of the *Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle*. *Volksdeutsche* must be enlisted for the leadership of *volksdeutsch* organizations.

Party activity was now banned in his post of Argentina. Argentina was particularly afraid of "Nazi infiltration" because she was a typical immigration country. Argentina was endeavouring to turn the immigrants into Argentinians as soon as the second generation (people of dual nationality). In opposition to this stood the desire of the Party organization to galvanize the German community into activity. Thus there arose an insurmountable opposition between the German and Argentinian attitudes.

The Ambassador gave a warning against the continued existence of a camouflaged Party organization, which was too obvious. In future

<sup>3</sup> Ambassador in the Argentine Republic.

the "German Community" [*Deutsche Gemeinschaft*] must take over the leadership of the Reich Germans. The Hoheitsträger should occupy key posts in the "German Community".

Herr von Thermann also held the view that in Argentina the recruiting of Reich Germans to the Party and to the Third Reich as a whole could be regarded as complete. Anyone who by today had not found his way to us, would never do so in the future. Hitherto 75 per cent of our activity had been devoted to recruiting the Germans and only 25 per cent to winning over the Argentinians. In future the reverse ratio would be indicated.

The Ambassador thought it necessary that the representatives of outside agencies in our Reich Missions should be firmly integrated into the latter and should be firmly subordinated to the Head of the Mission. Direct reporting to their parent agencies without the knowledge of the Head of the Mission had proved unsatisfactory.

Ambassador von Schoen<sup>4</sup> stated that in Chile the same problems were present as in Argentina. The wave of anti-German feeling in Chile had been aroused by the reddest popular front Government on the Latin American continent. It was significant that the Communist Party belonged to the Government bloc. The xenophobia, formerly directed against the USA, was now directed against the Germans. Although the Party was not yet banned, Chile would certainly conform to Argentina's practice.

In order to continue the work of the German Community, the task of Party, *Volksdeutsche* and Reich Mission must be re-allotted. Tasks which in Chile's view were of a political nature and might therefore endanger Party activity must be transferred to other offices.

In this connection Herr von Schoen spoke in greater detail on the work of the press. Originally this had been chiefly directed by the local branch of the Party [*Landesgruppe*]. At first there had been no cause for the Embassy to intervene, one reason being that, on account of shortage of staff, it could not take over the press work in its entirety. Furthermore, the Chileans had raised no objections. In the meantime one part of the work of the press had been transferred to the Embassy. In view of the anti-German attitude of the Popular Front Government, press work must be taken completely out of the hands of the local branch of the Party and concentrated in the Embassy. It was therefore necessary that a professionally trained Press Adviser, if possible with a knowledge of the language, should be assigned to the Embassy.

The distribution of printed matter in Spanish should in future no longer be made by the Party because the Chileans regarded this as provocative political activity.

Even in spite of such restraint, it was still possible that the local

<sup>4</sup> Ambassador in Chile.

branch of the Party might be banned, as a result of the wild incitement at present against the German Reich; the National Socialist ideology and the German element itself. Admittedly the Government were at present mainly launching out against the Spanish Falangists. But measures against the Falangists would also affect the German Party organization. On our part we should give the Government no pretext for taking action against the Party.

Minister Langmann<sup>5</sup> stated that the situation in Uruguay was similar to that existing in Chile. Germany was being attacked because they wanted to attack her. It was a matter of indifference to the agitators whether it was a question of the Party or of other German institutions. From this it could be concluded that the Party organization must behave with as much reserve as possible. However, it remained the joint task of the Reich Mission and of the Party to keep the Germans and the inhabitants of the country immune from the new lying accusation of war guilt which was to be expected. We must realize that everything we did would be regarded as propaganda—even the dissemination of the Führer's speeches, irrespective of by whom. Speaking in particular about broadcasting work in Uruguay, Minister Langmann said we were far behind Britain and America. Our news bulletins were not topical enough and did not deal sufficiently with the countries competing with us. We must lay greater stress on influencing the local inhabitants.

The German transmissions, "The German Hour", in the Latin American countries themselves, were sponsored by the offices of the AO.

In Uruguay the Landeskreisleiter [*sic*]<sup>6</sup> and his radio expert were doing excellent work in this field. This radio work—quite apart from the lack of staff—could not be directed by the Reich Mission but only by people who, to all outward appearances, were private individuals. It must therefore remain in the hands of the Party. The recruiting campaign among the Reich Germans in Uruguay was by no means finished. There was still political uncertainty among the Germans, who, without some appropriate antidote, would fall a prey to hostile war guilt propaganda. German radio propaganda was indispensable as an instrument of enlightenment; in quiet times it must be handled as quietly as possible, so that it was not prematurely banned by the local authorities. Quite apart from this the Party organization was necessary as an antidote to hostile propaganda. Where the Party was banned, its place must be taken by a "shadow" Party organization.

With regard to the division of responsibility between the Reich Mission and the Party organization it was difficult to draw the dividing line between leadership and administrative interests. If there were a

<sup>5</sup> Minister in Uruguay.

<sup>6</sup> Presumably Dalldorf, Landesgruppenleiter of the NSDAP in Uruguay.

proper contact between the Head of a Mission and the Party Representative no special regulations would be necessary, because a joint line would always be found. The right of the Head of a Mission to examine the affairs of the Party was nothing new; it was the duty of the Reich Representative, being the only accredited representative of the Reich, to impose his views in all questions.

Minister Reinebeck<sup>7</sup> stated that until a few weeks ago the Party organization in Central America had enjoyed freedom of action. In Guatemala, with its 3,000 Reich Germans, the Government, and particularly the President, had even shown a certain understanding for the work of the Party. On the occasions of the New Year and of the President's birthday, there had been a regular exchange of telegrams in cordial terms between the local Party leader, as the representative of the Reich German colony, and the President. A completely new situation had arisen as a result of the stringent decree of May 26.<sup>8</sup> The Party had given no cause at all for the measure banning it; neither were there any complaints against it. The *volte-face* had been effected rather by anti-German influence from the USA and not least by German emigrants. Central America was engaged in a general defensive against the totalitarian States; this was first of all directed against Spain (Falangists) then against Germany, and finally against the Italians.

In the immediate future there would be no place in Guatemala for overt activities by the Party. Camouflaged Party activity would undoubtedly lead to new anti-German measures, e.g., the expulsion of the most valuable national comrades. It was to be expected that, just as in Guatemala, the Party would be banned from the other Central American States as well. The very presence of the Party was a thorn in the flesh of the Governments; the latter did not believe that the Party concerned itself solely with the Reich Germans. It would be in the interests of a subsequent resumption of Party activity if the Party machinery were cut down. There were tasks which could be relinquished by the Party without undue harm, and which could be performed by the authorities in inside cooperation with the Party without necessitating separate Party machinery.

Minister Reinebeck discussed in particular the economic activity of the Reich Mission and the Party. In this field there was a great deal of unnecessary duplication of work which was harmful to our prestige abroad. The Commercial Attachés of the Missions and the Party economic experts often reported on the same questions and indeed their reports were not seldom at variance. Herr Reinebeck thought

<sup>7</sup> Minister in Guatemala.

<sup>8</sup> A decree by the Government of Guatemala prohibiting political groups which received help, subsidies, or instructions from abroad, and banning foreign propaganda, uniforms and insignia.

that uniform reporting to the central authority in Berlin would be more useful. The Commercial Department of the Mission and the Economic Office of the Party sometimes gave contradictory information. Firms would sometimes apply to both quarters, but as a rule they applied to the quarter where they thought they would be best served, and to which they attributed the greater drive. This double-tracking not only made a bad impression abroad but promoted hostile propaganda about Germany's alleged intentions of economic hegemony, the Party being represented as the main protagonist of this. Herr Reinebeck referred in this connection to articles by the well-known anti-German American journalist Knickerbocker.<sup>9</sup> Minister Reinebeck then proposed that economic activity should be divided as follows between the official authorities and the Party:

The Reich Mission to take over all practical economic activity in constant cooperation with the Party.

The Party to undertake the extremely important ideological guidance of the German business man, in particular to educate him according to the principles of National Socialist economics.

Gauleiter Bohle began by stating the principle that the ideological guidance and leadership of Reich Germans abroad was the task of the AO. This naturally gave rise to points of friction with foreign States. The Party could in no way depart from its contention that every drop of Germanic [*Volkstum*] blood abroad must be preserved; it was therefore fighting against the attempts at assimilation in the Latin American countries.

The Gauleiter expressed himself on the various questions as follows:

1) *The Reich Representative's right of veto*, even if not clearly expressed, was as old as the AO itself. Responsibility for questions of foreign policy could not be borne by the local Party leader, but only by the Head of the Mission himself. Hence his right to intervene if he considered interests of foreign policy to be endangered. So far no Party representative had refused to conform to the wishes of the Head of the Mission in this respect.

It was neither possible nor necessary to extend and define the right of veto, which had a delaying effect. A right by the Head of the Mission to issue directives was in contradiction to the principle that the State could give no directives to the Party. It was impossible to lay down the right of veto, because all cases in which it might apply could not be specified. The Head of the Mission must make do with the right of veto accorded to him; in any case, with proper collaboration, Reich Representative and Party Representative would always reach agreement.

<sup>9</sup> Hubert Renfro Knickerbocker, European correspondent of various American newspapers.

*Volksdeutsch* questions had to be very differently assessed in the individual countries. Here the interests of foreign policy were safeguarded by the Head of the Mission's right of veto.

2) Up to the present 99 per cent of the *press work* had been done by the AO. It should remain in the hands of the Party as long as it was not established that it could be performed better or at least equally well by other quarters. The same applied to propaganda and radio. The AO attached no importance to whether or not this work was publicly done in their name. Without the cooperation of the Party, however, successful press work was not possible. For this purpose the press representatives of the AO would be available to the Reich Missions as private individuals.

3) *The recruiting of Reich Germans* could never be regarded as completed. The Gauleiter was obliged to oppose Ambassador von Thiermann's proposal that 75 per cent of the recruiting activity should be directed to foreigners and only 25 per cent to Germans. On the contrary 80 per cent of the propaganda was needed for the Germans. Germans abroad must not only become National Socialists; they must remain so. In an emergency it was the duty of the Party to place a disciplined German community abroad at the disposal of the Head of Mission. It was to the credit of the AO that the Reich today could rely on its German community abroad with far more certainty than in 1914.

The Gauleiter thought it was the task of the Conference to ascertain what could be done to keep up the Party's impetus even in places where it would be banned. He was expecting it to be banned throughout South America. The principle must apply that a ban on the Party would be recognized by us *de jure* but not *de facto*. A practical way of maintaining the activity of the Party the Gauleiter considered to be the inclusion in the Missions of representatives of the Head of the AO as experts on the German community with the local functions of a Landesgruppenleiter. No Government could take exception to this. A united front between the Reich Mission and the Party must prevent the old bourgeois club life abroad from starting up again in consequence of a ban on the Party for otherwise nothing would be left of National Socialism.

4) *Duplication of work* was not sought by the Party. Certain tasks (registration law, Reich elections, social and cultural functions, return home and repatriation) could never be dealt with by the Reich Missions without multiplication of staff. Even in countries where the Party was banned, the cooperation of the Party in these questions must be assured for the future.

5) *The economic activity* of the AO was, at the instance of Field Marshal Göring, conducted within the framework of the Four Year Plan. A change in the present position was impossible without the

consent of the Field Marshal. Therefore this question could not be discussed at present.

State Secretary von Weizsäcker, in summing up, said that the interesting course of the first session had illustrated both differences of conditions and differences of opinion. In his view, however, the differences were not so great but that they could not be bridged through the compulsion of a common interest. The time had not yet come to draw conclusions. In the first place the Head of each Mission should draw up a written memorandum of three to four pages, showing where, in his country, the political shoe pinched and what proposals he could make for the removal of difficulties. The State Secretary recommended that similar memoranda should be prepared by the local Party leaders of the AO. The two sets of memoranda<sup>10</sup> could then be exchanged, and a cross section of their contents could be made, to serve as the basis for working out principles for future cooperation.

The State Secretary said he was glad that Gauleiter Bohle had laid down the primary claim of foreign policy. This important confirmation had hitherto not been known to all Heads of Missions. The State Secretary had also to inform the Heads of Missions that the Foreign Minister was willing in future to make them fully responsible for all happenings in foreign policy, not only connected with their own work but also with that of the AO. Good cooperation with Party representatives meant a relief from this responsibility but did not mean a release from it.

The State Secretary closed the meeting at 1:35 p.m. The next joint meeting with the representatives of the AO, possibly a smaller meeting, is to take place after assessing the memoranda of the Heads of Missions and Party representatives.

<sup>10</sup> The memoranda drawn up in response to these proposals are not printed (53/35860-98 and 53/35915-42).

## No. 510

3039/600561

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Hungary*

#### Telegram

No. 167

BERLIN, June 12, 1939—3:45 p.m.

Pol. IV 3558.

With reference to your telegram No. 178 of June 10.<sup>1</sup>

In respect of paragraphs 1 and 2:

The meaning and purpose of the Yugoslav initiative, on which no information is so far available here from elsewhere, is not clear to me.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 503.

What is to be the substance of the agreement between the four Powers? Why should Turkey act as mediator?

In respect of paragraph 3:

The Hungarian instructions to the Minister in Ankara are not understood here either. In our view, given Turkey's present attitude towards the Axis Powers, it is scarcely suitable for her to be made the mediator in Balkan affairs not only by Yugoslavia, but now also by Hungary, even though the Hungarian action is only intended as a matter of tactics.

I request you to make still more thorough enquiries as to how the two initiatives originated and the underlying reasons for them, and to report by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 511

1625/388877

#### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

##### Telegram

No. 195 of June 12

LONDON, June 12, 1939—4:12 p.m.

Received June 12—6:25 p.m.

Pol. II 2040.

With reference to my telegram No. 189 of June 4 [*sic*].<sup>1</sup>

I learn from a reliable source that the British answer to the Soviet Russian Note, reported in my telegram under reference, has first been sent to the French Government for their comments.<sup>2</sup> The British draft reply consists of 6 articles.

Article I. The contracting Powers promise each other mutual support in the following eventualities:

- 1) In the event of a direct attack on one of them.
- 2) In the event of aggression by a third party on one of the guaranteed States.
- 3) In the event of the contracting Parties recognizing, after consultation which can be called for under Article III of the Treaty by each of the signatory States, that a threat exists to the vital interests of one of the signatory States.

Article II. General Staff talks.

Article III contains the procedure for the eventuality provided for in Article I, third eventuality: If one of the three contracting States considers its interests to be threatened, it can demand immediate consultation.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 473.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 743, and vol. vi, Nos. 3 and 35.



Article IV contains the provision of which you are already aware whereby in rendering assistance the interests of the guaranteed States must be safeguarded (reassurance for Poland and especially for Rumania).

Article V contains a provision to which the Soviet Union has evidently attached importance: the contracting States pledge themselves not to conclude a separate peace if it should come to war.

Article VI. The Treaty is valid for an initial period of five years.

DIRKSEN

## No. 512

1625/388975

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

ANKARA, June 12, 1939—10:50 p.m.

No. 190 of June 12

Received June 13—1:05 a.m.

Pol. II 2039.

The Foreign Minister asked me to call on him and discussed the report of the Turkish Ambassador in Berlin on his conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister (your telegram No. 138 of June 10).<sup>1</sup> He asked me about the reason for this exhaustive and obviously very serious conversation, whereupon I replied that the Reich Foreign Minister had wished to make clear to the Ambassador personally the whole gravity of the situation that had arisen in consequence of Turkish policy. Acting on instructions, I also repeated the reasons for our profound surprise. Saracoğlu attempted once again to defend his policy, without advancing any new arguments. He also asked whether it was customary in Berlin to have a secretary present at such discussions. I told him that the Reich Foreign Minister had probably done this to emphasize the importance of his statements. The impression made by this serious discussion seems to me definitely to have had the desired effect. Saracoğlu hoped I should soon be able to tell him what the final line in future German-Turkish relations would be. Turkey obviously feels very ill at ease at everything remaining *in suspenso*.<sup>2</sup> To the question whether I had received a reply about the non-delivery of the Skoda guns, I answered in the negative; I furthermore pointed out again that maintenance of friendly relations depended entirely on Turkey.

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed, see document No. 496, footnote 12.

<sup>2</sup> In a despatch supplementing this telegram (No. A 1316 of June 13, not printed, 1593/384311) Papen reported that not only had Saracoğlu asked for as speedy a decision as possible on the future of German-Turkish relations, but had maintained that Turkey was compelled to take measures to counter the present "policy of suspense", and said he had given instructions not to renew contracts of Germans employed in Turkish public or semi-public undertakings.

## No. 513

1625/358872-73

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

ANKARA, June 12, 1939—10:55 p.m.

No. 189 of June 12

Received June 13—1:05 a.m.

Pol. II 2038.

Gafencu has just received me for a detailed conversation, after having already told me yesterday that he had let Saracoğlu know that Turkish criticism of the German-Rumanian Treaty had made a very painful impression.<sup>1</sup> The appreciation of this Treaty which he had expressed in the session of the Chamber on June 9 proved that Rumania looked upon it as an important instrument of peace. In this speech, he had quoted the Führer's remark that war was no solution for problems and had brought this message of peace to the notice of London and Paris. As to the Anglo-Turkish treaty, Gafencu said that, from his intimate knowledge of Turkish affairs, he could assure me that until the occupation of Albania, Turkey had adhered unswervingly to the policy of neutrality. He believed that the occupation of Albania at the price of Turkey had been a bad bargain for the Axis Powers. His efforts to exclude the Balkan Entente from the negotiations on the pact with Britain had met with understanding here. Tomorrow's communiqué would refer to the special function of the Balkan Entente in this respect. He thought he could assure me that in the final Anglo-Turkish pact no account would be taken of paragraph 6 of the Declaration made in the Chamber on May 12.<sup>2</sup> When I asked him about the forthcoming Turco-French declaration he told me in strict confidence that Turkey was to make a declaration identical with that of May 12. He was trying to get paragraph 6 deleted but did not know if he would succeed. In any case I have the impression that Gafencu has conducted his conversations here in accordance with our expectations, especially as otherwise the solidarity of the Balkan Pact would be endangered. Gafencu concluded the conversation by saying that, for the maintenance of peace, it was by no means sufficient to form coalitions; problems should be tackled. He thought that, in the autumn, Britain and the United States would be ready to make precisely formulated proposals to that end.

PAPEN

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<sup>1</sup> Gafencu paid an official visit to Ankara, June 11-14.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483 and document No. 474, footnote 3.

## No. 514

103/111412-13

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

[Draft]<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

No....

BERLIN, June 12, 1939.

zu W 863 g.<sup>2</sup>867 g.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 93 of June 9.<sup>3</sup>

For the Chargé d'Affaires.

Please inform People's Commissar Mikoyan as follows in reply to his latest communications:

The German Government are prepared to send Schnurre to Moscow with full power to negotiate on expanding and strengthening economic relations between the Reich and the Soviet Union, and if agreement is reached, to finalize it. From the fact of our sending a German plenipotentiary as negotiator we request the Soviet Union to conclude that the German Government expect and desire a positive settlement on a broadened basis. We would therefore also be prepared to accept the Soviet counter proposal of February 1939<sup>4</sup> as a basis for the negotiations. In the interval we have endeavoured to remove the obstacles which in February still seemed to us insurmountable. We expect the Soviet Government also to re-examine Soviet deliveries of raw materials in the light of German desires in order to establish a balance of services rendered under the future treaty.

If Mikoyan agrees, please announce Schnurre's arrival for the beginning of next week.

The above instructions may be left in the form of a written communication with Mikoyan.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> No confirmation that this telegram was sent has been found. A typewritten marginal note at the head reads: "To the Foreign Minister before despatch."

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 499.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 491.

## No. 515

7693/E548433-34

*The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 977

DANZIG, June 12, 1939.  
Pol. V 5428.

Subject: Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig and Danzig Customs officials being put on oath.

With reference to my report No. 930 II of June 5, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

In the above-mentioned matter the Polish Diplomatic Representation here has replied to the Danzig Note of June 3,<sup>2</sup> which I transmitted with my previous report, in a Note dated June 10, which I enclose in translation.<sup>3</sup>

The Polish Note rejects the complaints about the conduct of the Polish Customs Inspectors, describes the present number of Polish Customs Inspectors on duty in Danzig as insufficient and states that no sort of restrictions of the rights of the Polish Customs Inspectors can be permitted. On the question of Danzig Customs officials taking the oath the Polish Note states that in the event of their being sworn in, the Polish Government must consider increasing the number of Customs Inspectors, since the Danzig Customs officials, as it says literally in the Note, "can then be relied upon still less than hitherto to respect the Polish Customs regulations and to apply them properly".

As I learn from the Senate, the number of Polish Customs Inspectors in the Territory of Danzig at present totals 106, including the increase of 31 officials which took place after the incident in Kalthof;<sup>4</sup> and against this there has been a withdrawal of only two Polish officials.

JANSON

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed. See document No. 471, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 471.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7693/E548435-40).

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 416, 417 and 418.

## No. 516

2981/584292-93

*Ambassador Bülow-Schwante to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

BRUSSELS, June 12, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: During our last conversation in April<sup>1</sup> we discussed the question whether there was some suitable

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<sup>1</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

personage who, on account of his personal relations with the King, could be employed by us at a moment which seemed important.

On that subject I should now like to submit the following:

Last night I had a visit from Professor Gebhard, the medical specialist for athletes from Hohenlychen, who is very well known here in Belgium. For some two years he has been attending the King, the Queen Mother and the King's children, is often called in here, enjoys the highest medical reputation and has the personal confidence of the whole Royal Family. Gebhard told me that, at every visit, the King has long and detailed conversations with him on political questions, especially those concerning Germany, and that in this way he has the opportunity of telling the King a good deal. Gebhard, who was here for the day only yesterday to visit the Royal Family, will be back again on July 11 for a few days, after which he has been invited to the Palace of Laeken as a guest of the King. A prior conversation with Gebhard has been arranged and close cooperation thus ensured. Gebhard attends professionally, among other people, M. Heinemann, the director of the large local electrical company, who is one of the King's political advisers, also Count Guillaume de Grunne, Master of the Household to the Queen Mother, Madame Camu, wife of the Commissaire Royal for Belgian administrative reform, Countess Baillet-Latour and other well-known persons. At all events I think that in Professor Gebhard, who is charming in his easy-going Bavarian way, and who seems to be gifted with political acumen, I have found a person who can be used to exert influence on the King at a critical moment.<sup>2</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours,

BÜLOW-SCHWANTE

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "[for the] Foreign Minister" and initialed "R[ibbentrop]".

## No. 517

2981/584204-95

*Ambassador Bülow-Schwante to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

BRUSSELS, June 12, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Herr von Bargaen<sup>1</sup> brought me your instructions to tell a leading General to his face, at a suitable opportunity, that, according to reports to hand in Berlin,<sup>2</sup> contacts exist between the Belgian and French Armies and then to report on how this statement was received. As I have not lately met a suitably important representative of the Belgian Army for this purpose and there

<sup>1</sup> Dr. W. von Bargaen, Counsellor at the German Embassy at Brussels.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Such information had in fact been received here but was unconfirmed."

is no likelihood of a chance encounter in the near future, I have chosen the following course on the assumption that the message should come to the knowledge of the most competent departments as "avis aux lecteurs".

Count Guillaume de Grunne, whom I already knew very well before I took up my post, has always been on most friendly terms with the Mission here. Grunne left the diplomatic service with the rank of Minister, to take up the post of Master of the Household to the Queen Mother. He has close contacts with the King and the *Cabinet du Roi*, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, indeed, one may say, with all the leading political personalities and owing to his friendly manners enjoys general popularity. Grunne can be regarded as relatively frank [*aufgeschlossen*] towards us, at any rate as thoroughly loyal, and he is always at pains to smooth matters out. Meeting him socially, I took the opportunity, in the course of a casual conversation, suddenly to inform him of what had been noticed in Berlin. He was obviously shaken but, as a convinced supporter of the King's policy of independence, I think this was more by the fact that such alleged reports of the existence of Belgian-French military contacts were discrediting the King's policy in Berlin, than by our having caught the Belgians out. He emphasized that the King would in no circumstances tolerate such machinations. At any rate it may be taken for granted that my remarks will become known in the appropriate quarters. We shall continue to pursue the matter here.<sup>3</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

BÜLOW-SCHWANTE

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "[for the] Foreign Minister" and initialed "R[ibbentrop]". In a letter of June 19 (not printed, 2981/534296) Weizsäcker replied that he would be much interested in a further report, which Bülow-Schwante duly submitted on June 27 (document No. 575).

## No. 518

1625/388882

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 191 of June 13

ANKARA, June 13, 1939—5:25 p.m.

Received June 14—4:15 a.m.

Pol. II 2063.

I took advantage of yesterday's reception to make clear to Numan, on the lines of my telegram No. 189,<sup>1</sup> the need to leave the Balkan Powers out of the Franco-Turkish declaration. Germany would be

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 513.

able to test the sincerity of the Turkish desire to maintain friendly relations by whether Turkey would be prepared to forgo inclusion of the Balkan Pact in the Anglo-Turkish mutual agreement. Numan said that the Franco-Turkish declaration would be in the same terms as that of May 12,<sup>2</sup> but that in the speech by the President of the Chamber on the occasion of the declaration, the separate function of the Balkan Pact would be clearly brought out. He believed he could assure me that, in accordance with our desire, the Balkans would in no way be brought into the Anglo-French pact. Seeing that the new marriage has only been in existence for four weeks, this limitation is certainly an achievement.<sup>3</sup>

The Iraqi Chargé d'Affaires<sup>4</sup> told me that his Government would never agree to the cession of Hatay with its large Arab minority. I leave to you the question of intensifying our propaganda against bargaining away Christian and Arab interests.

PAPEN

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Anglo-Turkish Declaration; see Editors' Note on p. 483.

<sup>3</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 227.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably Memduh Zeki, Attaché at the Iraqi Legation in Ankara.

## No. 519

3039/500562-63

### *The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 180 of June 13

BUDAPEST, JUNE 13, 1939—5:50 p.m.

Received June 13—10:20 p.m.

Pol. IV 3617.

With reference to your telegram No. 167.<sup>1</sup>

1. As the Foreign Minister is very much occupied at present with the opening of Parliament, I called on his deputy.

Minister Vörnle read out to me a telegram from the Hungarian Minister in Belgrade dated June 1, according to which the Yugoslav Deputy Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> had tried to convince him of the expediency of a Hungarian-Rumanian *rapprochement*, adding that this *rapprochement* was a precondition for the desired formation of a neutral bloc, to which Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary were to belong.

The Yugoslav State Secretary<sup>2</sup> had observed that, in his opinion, Rumania might perhaps be disposed, in the interests of bringing this group into being, to return a part of the Dobruja with 150,000 inhabitants to Bulgaria. The Hungarian Minister in Belgrade listened

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 510.

<sup>2</sup> Miloje Smiljanic, Director of the Political Department in the Yugoslav Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and acting Deputy Foreign Minister.

to these vague soundings and merely replied that the time for friendly agreement between Hungary and Rumania had apparently not come yet.

Vörnle remarked that the matter had been closed through the negative attitude meanwhile adopted by Gafencu towards the Hungarian proposal for the conclusion of a minorities agreement with Rumania. When I asked what Csáky had meant in his speech yesterday by the new political line envisaged for protecting the Hungarian minority in Rumania, Vörnle replied that, as Hungarian efforts to reach an arrangement with Rumania must now be considered to have failed, presumably attempts were to be made to exert pressure on Rumania indirectly through the Great Powers for the better treatment of the Hungarian minority. The details were not yet clear.<sup>3</sup>

2. On June 7, the Hungarian Foreign Minister had instructed the Hungarian Minister in Ankara to point out to the Turkish Foreign Minister that the pacification of the Danube basin and consequently the security of the Balkans were being hampered because territorial questions between Hungary and Rumania were still not settled. He was to make it clear to the Foreign Minister that the position of the Turkish Government in Central and South East Europe was such as to permit of their broaching this matter to the Rumanian Foreign Minister, during his present visit, pointing out to him that a settlement of these territorial questions was urgent. On June 10 the Minister had replied that he had carried out these instructions. Without entering into a discussion, the Turkish Foreign Minister had said that he would pass on the fact of this Hungarian *démarche* to the President who was in Istanbul. If the latter agreed, he would speak to Gafencu on the lines desired.

Vörnle, who also read me both these two telegrams, repeated that the Hungarian *démarche* had only been made for tactical reasons, in order to prevent Bulgaria's accession to the Balkan Pact.<sup>4</sup>

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>3</sup> The substance of point 1 above, together with extracts from Budapest telegram No. 178 (document No. 503), was repeated to Belgrade by Woernmann, in telegram No. 166 of June 17 (not printed, 3039/600567-68), with instructions to make enquiries of the Yugoslav Foreign Minister after consultation with the Hungarian Minister in Belgrade.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 175 of June 17 (not printed, 3039/600564), Weizsäcker instructed Erdmannsdorff to express German surprise to the Hungarian Foreign Minister at the inclusion of Turkey in the Hungarian action; the Hungarian Government were aware that Turkey belonged to the encirclement Powers; in the German view no position of supremacy in the Balkans could be accorded to Turkey. Weizsäcker repeated this telegram of instructions together with the substance of point 2 above and extracts from Budapest telegram No. 178 (document No. 503) to Rome, in telegram No. 295 of June 17 (not printed, 3039/600565-66), requesting Mackensen to propose that similar instructions be given to the Italian Legation in Budapest. Mackensen replied on June 22 (telegram No. 269, not printed, 3039/600593) that such instructions had been given. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 237, 278, 290 and 295.



## No. 520

1625/388879-80

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Moscow, June 13, 1939—7:19 p.m.

No. 98 of June 13

Received June 14—12:50 a.m.

Pol. II 2060.

With reference to my telegram No. 92 of June 7.<sup>1</sup>

In a leading article, today's *Pravda* deals with protection of the Baltic States, Estonia, Latvia and Finland against aggression.<sup>2</sup> Some foreign journalists had thought this question far-fetched, but they had now recognized that the maintenance of neutrality for these States was of vital interest to the security of the Soviet Union. Others had objected that this question was not of immediate importance for France and Britain; but they had soon had to recognize the error of this objection. The objection that such assistance was not in the interests of Estonia, Latvia and Finland, who could successfully defend themselves, was disproved by the fate of the far stronger Czecho-Slovakia. The objection that acceptance of aid would mean loss of sovereignty for the Baltic States was absurd. Neither Rumania, Greece nor Belgium had suffered loss of sovereignty by the British guarantee.

Finally, some British and French journalists were saying that official representatives of the Baltic States had declined offers of assistance from peace-loving Powers, and that therefore these countries should not have aid forced upon them. Apparently this is a misunderstanding or an evil and insidious desire on the part of some politicians to break up the peace front. As the peoples of Estonia, Latvia and Finland are vitally interested in aid from peace-loving Powers in case of direct or indirect attack by an aggressor, Selter's and Erkko's rejection of assistance by peace-loving Powers can only be explained by their under-estimating the threat of aggression, or as due to certain foreign influences, if not indeed direct inspiration from those who wish to hinder the peace front. At the moment it was difficult to say who were the real instigators: the aggressive Powers or certain reactionary circles in democratic countries who wanted to limit aggression to certain regions, but not to prevent its outbreak in other places. In similar underestimation of the danger of attack, Polish and Rumanian representatives had at first had scruples about the guarantee of their countries by the Soviet Union and about the conclusion of a three-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 486.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 42, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 208.

power pact, but had later dropped these scruples. The same might happen in the near future to certain representatives of the Baltic States. The attitude of the Soviet Union on the question of protecting the three Baltic States from aggression was the only right one and was in keeping with the interests of the peace-loving nations as well as with those of Estonia, Latvia and Finland.

In view of Strang's arrival<sup>3</sup> the Soviets evidently consider it expedient once again to set forth and justify their familiar uncompromising attitude over protection for the three Baltic States.

There is not a word in the article about the German Non-Aggression Pacts with Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

TIPPELSKIRCH

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<sup>3</sup> In Moscow on June 14 for negotiations with the Soviet Government. See document No. 532.

## No. 521

1625/358889-91

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 484

BERLIN, June 13, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. II 2097.

The British Ambassador, who was talking to me today about an alleged currency offence by his German servant, presently turned the conversation to his anxiety as to how we could survive the summer without a conflict.<sup>1</sup> Henderson conducted the conversation as a private one, and did not make it clear where his own views stopped and official ones began. Towards the end, he was unquestionably representing Halifax's views, whereas in the first part of the conversation he expressed criticism of British policy in Warsaw and Moscow.

It is well known that for some days the press has been referring to a report by Henderson who is said to wish to expedite the treaty negotiations with Moscow.<sup>2</sup> Without going into this, Henderson made a statement to the following effect: While negotiations between London and Moscow were in progress, a conversation between London and Berlin was of course impossible. Once the Russian pact was concluded, discussions with Berlin should be easier. By this Henderson presumably meant to say something like *The Times* did, namely, that strength and willingness to negotiate were quite compatible with each other; without strength Britain was perhaps not even a suitable partner for negotiations.

On the subject of Britain's pact with Russia, I made a few remarks

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<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Nos. 45 and 50.

<sup>2</sup> Reported by DNB on June 13 as from the French press (not printed, 8199/E583070-72).

ridiculing its advantages for Britain, and a very serious one on its effect in promoting war, particularly in Poland. British policy, I said, was diametrically opposed to Henderson's own thesis, which he had already repeatedly stated in public: "England wants the sea for herself, the continent of Europe can be left to Germany". Instead of this, the fact was that Britain was now undertaking greater and greater commitments on the Continent; for instance, she was allowing the Poles to gamble with her destiny. If there were any logic in British policy at all, the only logic I could see was that England was resolved on a preventive war and was working for it.

Henderson reacted very sensitively to this remark. There could be no question whatever of such a will to war. He deplored certain Labour influences; he did not in any way defend the Anglo-Polish Agreement and said that no Runciman would be sent to Warsaw. Neither did he deny Polish unpredictableness or obstinacy. But, as usual, he ascribed the change of front in London to Germany's march into Rump Czechia. In conclusion he reverted once again to the danger period of this summer.

From here on, Henderson, obviously acting on instructions, spoke of London's willingness to negotiate with Berlin. Halifax obviously had in mind that the present state of tension could and must be ended by means of discussions.<sup>3</sup> Neither England nor Germany could, or wanted to, bear the burden of rearmament any longer. The ending of the armaments race and the revival of economic relations could be the subject of discussions between London and Berlin. The colonial question could also be discussed. I made no comments on these remarks except to say that something similar had already been brought to my knowledge from London through different channels, but that I could not make anything of such unsubstantiated remarks.

It could be deduced from these conversational statements of Henderson's, that he is not happy about British relations with the Poles, that he thinks nothing of the Russian pact, and that, for the rest, he is deeply concerned about a possible conflict this summer, for he feels his responsibility as Ambassador in Berlin weighing heavily upon him.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> Presumably a reference to Lord Halifax's speeches on foreign policy in the House of Lords on June 8 and 12. See *Parl. Deb., H. of L.*, vol. 113, cols. 350-364 and 428-437.

## No. 522

472/225588-90

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

CONFIDENTIAL

ROME, June 13, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: With reference to my conversation with the Duce

which I have reported in several telegrams,<sup>1</sup> I should like, in the form of a private letter, to mention another matter about which Ciano detained me for a few minutes after my audience with the Duce. It really goes very much against the grain to repeat this, yet Ciano put it to me in a way which makes it inevitable that this information should be passed on to Berlin.

He began by saying in a very roundabout way, and with repeated references to our custom of discussing even delicate matters with one another in perfect confidence and frankness, that both he and the Duce had been rather struck by the fact that, in his conversations, Serrano Suñer had at first spoken rather sceptically in many respects about the situation in the Reich. He mentioned *inter alia* the relations between State and Party, between Führer and Army, and other things as well, which it is not necessary to enumerate in detail. The Duce corrected him in no uncertain terms, and painted a picture of the Third Reich for his Spanish visitor which corresponds with his (Mussolini's) own innermost views. Thereupon Serrano Suñer thanked him heartily, and described this information as of extreme value not only to him but also to Franco. If he were to be quite frank, the views he had expressed did not come from a random source, but—and here came the extremely unpleasant part of the whole thing—they originated in remarks by a German liaison officer attached to Franco's headquarters. Ciano handed me the name which Suñer had written down, adding that the man in question was a Colonel or a General. He asked Suñer whether he might make use of this information and had received the perfectly straight answer: "Yo lo denuncio formalmente." According to Ciano's account of what he had understood from Serrano, the officer is supposed to have constantly and entirely unreservedly enlarged on the above matters in Franco's headquarters and, in the intimate circles surrounding Franco, to have conjured up a picture of the Third Reich which had shaken the belief in our régime right up to the Generalissimo and Suñer himself.

In view of the grave consequences which this information might have for the officer in question, I took the opportunity, as my wife and I were lunching today with Serrano Suñer and his wife in the most intimate circle without any Italians present, to approach him about Ciano's communications. This proved a good thing inasmuch as it enabled me, in the first place, to establish the fact that the person in question was not a Colonel or General, but a Major; but besides this—and this is the most important point—Serrano Suñer stressed repeatedly that the person certainly did not, in his conversations, appreciate the import of his remarks, and, above all, did not take into account the extraordinary credulity of the average Spaniard who

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 523, 524 and 525.

anyhow accepts a word from such a source as quite genuine. For the rest, however, Serrano Suñer, in conversation with me too, adhered to the version he had given Count Ciano.

With your permission, I shall confine myself to this report to you and leave it to your judgement what use you wish to make of it. It is not pleasant for me to have to make these reports.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

MACKENSEN

Ciano showed me a slip of paper on which (obviously in Serrano's handwriting) the name of the officer was given as "Wighelmi", therefore probably Wilhelmi.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This postscript is in Mackensen's handwriting. Note against it in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "Correct."

This document is marked in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "[For the] Foreign Minister" and initialled "R[ibbentrop]". A marginal note reads: "I recommend that a copy of the letter be given to General Halder who is Wilhelmi's superior officer. I would, however, first ask Stohrer's opinion. It seems certain to me that W. cannot remain on Franco's staff. The question of what else is to be done with him might be settled later. W[eißsäcker] 15/6." A note of June 17 (not printed, 472/228591) by Brücklmeier stated that the Foreign Minister approved action on the lines proposed by Weizsäcker. In a letter of June 20 (not printed, 472/228785-87), Weizsäcker wrote to Stohrer enclosing a copy of this document and asking him for his opinion on the matter. In telegram No. 623 of June 22 (not printed, 2928/566885), Stohrer asked whether he might discuss the matter with the German Military Attaché, but was instructed, in telegram No. 426 of June 23 (not printed, 2928/566886) to refrain from doing so, as Halder was to be semi-officially informed, and the matter was not to be dealt with beforehand by any other military authority. No further material on this case has been found.

## No. 523

583/242104-05

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

ROME, June 14, 1939—1:40 a.m.

No. 252 of June 13

Received June 14—5:40 a.m.

In the course of about half an hour's conversation on general political subjects today, following the presentation of the Manesse manuscript<sup>1</sup> to the Duce, Mussolini asked Ciano, who had remained with him after making his report, to read out to me a telegram just received from the Italian Embassy<sup>2</sup> in Moscow. In this the Embassy,<sup>2</sup> as a result of a conversation held with Count von der Schulenburg, reports proposals which the latter intended to make in Berlin about certain steps to be taken with the Moscow Government, and which I assume are therefore

<sup>1</sup> A thirteenth century collection of German lyrics.

<sup>2</sup> The Rome draft of this telegram (2130/465583-85) here reads: "Ambassador [Rosso]". See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 201.

known to you. The Duce, welcoming this idea, remarked that these proposals reached, but did not go beyond, the limit . . . (group mutilated)<sup>3</sup> what we could do in approaching Russia without running the risk of misunderstanding amongst our own people—and here he was also thinking of the Spanish people. These proposals might perhaps still be in time to prevent the Soviets from concluding an agreement with Britain and France. In his view, this agreement would scarcely be furthered by the visit of Mr. Strang, for it was really hardly flattering to the Russians that, in a question of such importance, the British were sending to Moscow an official, who, after all, was only of second or third rank, an estimate of Strang which Ciano, on being referred to, expressly confirmed.

Furthermore, in the Duce's view, more and more voices were making themselves heard among the Conservatives in Britain against collaboration with Russia, because they had realized that in the long run such collaboration could not fail to have the strongest repercussions on the domestic conditions obtaining in Britain and France. This was Mussolini's view too, and he thought that in France, perhaps even more than in Britain, a treaty link with the Soviets would sooner or later lead the latter to meddle in the domestic concerns of their treaty partner, by demanding that not only should the Communists be given a share in the affairs of State *à la* Popular Front, but even that these affairs should be handed over to them. Undoubtedly such a danger existed for France, and in less measure for Britain where the Communists in any case played a less important part. He based his view on statements of the Russian Ambassador [*sic*]<sup>4</sup> here, Helfand, a highly intelligent man who was an extreme Communist and had a fanatical hatred for the bourgeoisie of the Western democracies.

The Duce concluded these remarks by saying that if, however, the pact eventually came into being this would not be too great a misfortune, for of one thing he had no doubt: Russia would not fight outside her own frontiers.

To be continued.

MACKENSEN

<sup>3</sup> The Rome draft here reads: "of".

<sup>4</sup> The Rome draft here reads "Counselor of Embassy".

## No. 524

583/242106

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 253 of June 13

ROME, June 14, 1939—1:40 a.m.

Received June 14—4:15 a.m.

Continuation of telegram No. 252.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 523.

The Duce then mentioned the present visit to Berlin of the Japanese Ambassador here,<sup>2</sup> who was bringing certain new proposals which seemed to betoken a relaxation of the attitude hitherto adopted by Japan. He did not yet know the details, and Ciano too said that the Ambassador had promised to give him the details only after his return from Berlin, but in speaking quite generally of the substance of these proposals he had indicated that they represented a step forward. The Japanese Ambassador said something similar to me during a fleeting encounter before his departure when, however, I gained the impression that he himself was not yet completely satisfied with what the proposals contained. The Duce said, however, that one should be satisfied with any steps in the right direction.

The Duce then asked Ciano to read out to me a telegram which had just arrived from Tokyo,<sup>3</sup> in which the Italian Ambassador there reports on Japanese measures, initiated with some prospect of success, for the establishment of a new Government of the [*sic*]<sup>4</sup> Chinese Central Government which should have its seat in Nanking. Both the Duce and Ciano seemed to take a favourable view of this new attempt and to expect considerable results from its execution, if it were successful.

To be continued.

MACKENSEN

<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 535 and 538, the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of June 10, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 236.

<sup>3</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 194.

<sup>4</sup> The Rome draft (2130/465586-87) here reads: "a new Chinese Central Government".

## No. 525

583/242108-10

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 254 of June 13

ROME, June 14, 1939—1:40 a.m.

Received June 14—5:40 a.m.

Continuation of telegram No. 253.<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion the Duce turned to the present visit to Rome of Serrano Suñer, whom he again described as a pillar of future relations between the Franco Government and the Axis Powers. In this respect he considered him absolutely reliable. He had taken the opportunity to put to him in simple terms a policy which, in his opinion, was indicated for Spain and which he would sum up briefly for me as follows: After the experiences of the Civil War, the long duration of which was to be ascribed to the Western democracies, there was only one possibility

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 524.

open to Spain, to lean towards the Axis Powers, all the more so as Spain had already moved two stages along this road, which she could not now retrace and which thus determined her course:

1) Withdrawal from the League of Nations.<sup>2</sup>

2) Accession to the Anti-Comintern Pact.<sup>3</sup>

She was now in the third stage, which, once Spain had got on to her feet again, could, however, only culminate in a close link [*Anschluss*] with the Axis Powers. Suñer had entirely agreed with these statements.

On my remarking that Suñer, in talking to me, had confined himself to describing in detail the repercussions of the strained relations between the Reich and the Curia on Spain's attitude to us, Mussolini smiled and said he was not surprised, for Suñer had also mentioned this matter to him; however, the latter's ties with the Roman Catholic Church should not be at all over-estimated for he remained in every way a prudent politician. He himself had answered Suñer's remarks by pointing out to him the completely different position occupied by the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, here, and in the Reich, and, in particular, had contrasted the fierce (*feroce*) Catholicism of Spain with the Catholicism of the Italian people, which, although very strong, was yet essentially more tolerant. Italy had had neither an Inquisition nor any other such exaggerated reactions in favour of the Church. Certainly, here too, in past centuries priests' heretics . . . (group mutilated)<sup>4</sup> had been burned, but these had been isolated cases. The trial of Giordano Bruno, for instance, had lasted nine years and, from his studies of its history, he had gathered that, in the end, this heretic had only been burned simply because he wanted to be burned. Mussolini's principle in dealing with the Church was: not the slightest real concession, especially not over important questions such as the education of youth, but, apart from that, conciliation in the sphere of religious services and so on. He had had his severest quarrel with the Vatican—precisely over the youth question—two years after the conclusion of the Lateran Treaties<sup>5</sup> and had carried his point up to the last detail. The fact that the Pope, now and then, protested against Italian measures was of no importance. He had to do that "per salvare animam suam, e", he added with a smile, "magari anche la mia".<sup>6</sup> That, in his view, was the most expedient policy towards the Vatican, for it deprived hostile propaganda of the opportunity to speak of a persecution of the Church or of Christendom. He had told Serrano

<sup>2</sup> This had been announced on May 9, 1939.

<sup>3</sup> On March 27, 1939. See vol. III of this Series, document No. 768.

<sup>4</sup> The Rome draft (2130/465588-92) here reads: "certainly here too in past centuries a heretic or two had been burned, but . . ."

<sup>5</sup> The Treaties signed in the Lateran Palace on February 11, 1929, consisting of the Treaty between the Holy See and Italy establishing the Vatican State, the Financial Convention and the Concordat. For the texts see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 130, pp. 791-814.

<sup>6</sup> "To save his soul and perhaps even mine as well."



that too, and had added that we Germans were very "thorough" in everything.

Moreover, Serrano, as Mussolini emphasized, had also spoken very frankly to the Pope and in particular had most sharply criticized the attitude of the Vatican during the Civil War.

Finally Mussolini mentioned in passing that Serrano had expressed to him the wish to be invited to Germany also at some time, and added that before we did this, we should perhaps wait until Suñer's position in Franco's Government was further strengthened, for, after all, he was at present only Minister of the Interior, with no influence on foreign policy. As he followed this immediately with a few derogatory remarks about Jordana's importance, it seemed to me he thought that Suñer might perhaps succeed the latter in the not too distant future.

MACKENSEN

## No. 526

174/135967

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, June 14, 1939—5:35 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Received June 14—1:35 p.m.

No. 248 of June 14

For the State Secretary.

With reference to my telegram No. 246 of June 13.<sup>1</sup>

On the Anglo-Japanese tension in Tientsin, the Director of the East Asia Department of the Foreign Ministry gave me the following account in strict confidence. The rigid Japanese attitude was part of a comprehensive move against Britain and China. The purpose of this move was primarily to win over the Chinese masses for a new Central Government which Japan was determined to set up in Nanking under Wang Ching-wei.<sup>2</sup> Negotiations with Wang Ching-wei, who, as I hear from another source, is at present in Japan, are progressing favourably, so that the formation of a Central Government may be expected comparatively soon. My informant hopes that the conclusion of the military alliance will give effective support to these plans. In the conversation there was a hint, also confirmed by other information, of the expectation that Germany and Italy would, as a logical consequence of the alliance, recognize the new Nanking Government, and

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8204/E583096). In this telegram Ott reported on impending Japanese measures for the blockade of the [British and French] concessions in Tientsin. On his making urgent representations, the Japanese had promised to take steps to avoid, as far as possible, any damage to German economic interests in Tientsin.

<sup>2</sup> He had been expelled from the Kuomintang and relieved of his posts in January 1939. See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 544.

that thus a painful blow would be struck at Chiang Kai-shek and the Powers behind him. Summing up, my informant stated that a successful termination of the China conflict was a very important and definite aim of Japanese policy, to which other questions would have to be subordinated, as the Cabinet had expressly laid down during the deliberations on the alliance. I have also received confirmation of this unanimous Cabinet decision from another well-informed quarter.

OTT

## No. 527

100/64521; 64524-25

*The State Secretary to the Ambassador in Italy*

BERLIN, June 14, 1939.

Received June 15.

zu RM 191.<sup>1</sup>

I send you, for your personal information, the attached copy of a letter of May 31 from Count Ciano to the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> which was brought by General Count Cavallero in person on his recent visit. The Foreign Minister requests you to transmit to Count Ciano the enclosed letter in reply, the contents of which you will see from the copy, also enclosed.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> Not printed (100/64522-23). This is a German translation of the letter printed as document No. 459.<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Letter handed to Ciano today and its contents briefly outlined to him orally. M[ackensen]. 18/6."[Enclosure]<sup>4</sup>

BERLIN, June 9, 1939.

DEAR CIANO: I had great pleasure in receiving General Count Cavallero, introduced to me in your letter of May 31. I am convinced that Count Cavallero will fully and ably accomplish the task entrusted to him of further organizing our joint collaboration in the politico-military field and that of war economy, in accordance with our Pact of Friendship and Alliance.<sup>5</sup> I have seen to it that Count Cavallero will be put in touch with those German personages who will conduct the negotiations in so far as I do not reserve them for myself. The contacts made by Count Cavallero in Berlin have already led to a certain clarification of the way in which our collaboration should be organized. We have agreed, subject to your approval, that Cavallero

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<sup>4</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 171.<sup>5</sup> Document No. 426.

will come to Berlin in about four weeks' time for the first joint meeting of both Commissions, at which the details of procedure and the agenda shall be laid down.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, we could already start discussions on the problems themselves on this occasion. I am sure that Attolico or Cavallero will, by this time, already have reported to you in similar terms.<sup>7</sup>

I have passed on to the Führer the memorandum which Count Cavallero handed to me for him. The Führer has read it with a lively sense of gratitude and the greatest interest. I have likewise transmitted his views to you through Attolico.<sup>8</sup> I can therefore refrain from dealing with this important document in this letter.

In sincere friendship and with cordial greeting,

Yours,

RIBBENTROP

<sup>6</sup> In memorandum St.S. No. 531 of July 1 (not printed, 1571/380161) Weizsäcker noted that he had left it to Attolico to enquire in Rome whether Cavallero might come to Berlin on July 10 for discussions on both the politico-military and war economy commissions. Attolico was inclined to postpone the first session until August, after, as he hoped, there had been a conversation between Hitler and Mussolini. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 428, and the present volume, document No. 717 with footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> See also *ibid.*, vol. xii, Nos. 72, 102, 131 and 134.

<sup>8</sup> For Attolico's report see *ibid.*, vol. xii, No. 130. No German record has been found of this message conveyed to Attolico through Ribbentrop, but see document No. 546.

## No. 528

1625/338894

### *The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 79 of June 15.

HELSINKI, June 15, 1939—2:30 p.m.

Received June 15—4:40 p.m.

Pol. II 2099.

The Finnish Foreign Minister told me the following:

1) The Russian Government had hinted that they had no objection to the fortification of the Aaland Islands, but had more interest in this group of islands than had Sweden, and hence must be kept informed about the work of fortification at least as much as was Sweden.<sup>1</sup> So long as Britain continued to woo Russia, Russian negotiators felt so important that Finland could not negotiate with them. The Finnish Government would only discuss the Aaland fortifications with Moscow later, and would, of course, give the same information to Germany as to Russia.

2) In the matter of the Three Power Pact, Finland had the assurance of the British Government that they would not conclude an agreement

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 440.

guaranteeing Finland, and would notify her if the negotiations came to the subject of Finland.<sup>2</sup> Since then no information had come from the British Government, not even about the so-called formula<sup>3</sup> published in the press. The Finnish Government assumed that Finland would be kept out of Strang's negotiations in Moscow.

3) If the foreign press had of late put Finland on a par with the Border States, this was the result of Russian propaganda. Finland kept to her Scandinavian orientation and received diplomatic support from the Swedish Government in Moscow and London.

BLÜCHER

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 434 and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, Nos. 610 and 635.

<sup>3</sup> The reference appears to be to the phrase used by Chamberlain in his statement on the progress of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations in the House of Commons on June 7, when he said: "... I hope that it may be possible now to suggest a formula acceptable to the three Governments, which, while having regard to the rights and interests of other States, will assure cooperation between those Powers in resistance to aggression." See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 348, cols. 400-402.

## No. 529

103/111425-27

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, June 15, 1939.

The Bulgarian Minister called on me today and told me the following in confidence: The Soviet Russian Chargé d'Affaires, with whom he was not at all on intimate terms, called on him yesterday without any apparent reason and stayed with him two hours. The long conversation, of which it could not be ascertained with certainty whether it had reflected the personal opinions of M. Astakhov or the opinions of the Soviet Government, could be summarized approximately as follows:

The Soviet Union faced the present world situation with hesitation. They were vacillating between three possibilities, namely, the conclusion of the pact with England and France, a further dilatory treatment of the pact negotiations, and a *rapprochement* with Germany. The Soviet Union was most in sympathy with this last possibility, which need not involve ideological considerations. In addition there were other points, for instance that the Soviet Union did not recognize the Rumanian occupation of Bessarabia.<sup>1</sup> The fear of a German attack, however, either through the Baltic countries or through Rumania, was an obstacle. In this connection the Chargé d'Affaires had also referred to *Mein Kampf*. If Germany would declare that she would not attack

<sup>1</sup> Rumania's sovereignty over Bessarabia, formerly part of the Russian Empire, had been recognized in the Treaty between the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan (the Principal Allied Powers) and Rumania relative to Bessarabia, signed at Paris, Oct. 28, 1920. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 113, pp. 647-651.

the Soviet Union, or that she would conclude a non-aggression pact with them, the Soviet Union would probably refrain from concluding a treaty with England. However, the Soviet Union did not know what Germany really wanted apart from certain very vague allusions. Several circumstances also spoke for the second possibility, namely to continue to conduct the pact negotiations with Britain and France in a dilatory manner. In this case the Soviet Union would continue to have a free hand in any conflict which might break out.

M. Draganov then said that he had declared to the Soviet Russian Chargé d'Affaires that Germany, in his opinion, could have no aggressive aims against the Soviet Union, and he had pointed out that the situation had also changed with respect to other countries since *Mein Kampf* had been written. He had reproached Russia with having helped Rumania to the Dobruja, for which the Chargé d'Affaires tried to lay the blame exclusively on the Tsarist Government.

At the end M. Draganov repeated again that he had no indications why M. Astakhov had made this disclosure to him. He was weighing the possibility that this must have been done with the intention that M. Draganov should report it to us.<sup>2</sup>

WOERMANN

<sup>2</sup> The following day Ribbentrop saw Shiratori, the Japanese Ambassador in Rome, then on a visit to Berlin (see document No. 538). In a memorandum of Sept. 4, 1939, (see vol. VIII of this Series, enclosure to document No. 11), Plessen recorded a conversation with Shiratori during which the latter told him that on June 16 Ribbentrop had informed him that "Since Japan had not accepted our [i.e., Germany's] proposals Germany would now conclude a non-aggression pact with Russia".

## No. 530

2092/452614-16

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, June 15, 1939.

e.o. W IV 2242.

1) German-Soviet trade has been subject to a continuous decline in recent years. As opposed to an almost unlimited German need for Soviet raw materials, German imports from the Soviet Union in 1938 amounted to only 50 million RM. The first quarter of 1939 showed a further drop in the imports of Soviet raw materials to 6 million RM.

2) The German shortage of raw materials and the fact that we can obtain raw materials from the Soviet Union against payment in Reichsmark or delivery of German industrial products, have led to ways being sought to induce the Soviet Government to increase their deliveries of raw materials.

Hereupon it became evident that the Soviet Government are not

unwilling to conclude an agreement with us for an expansion of our reciprocal trade on condition that:

a) we grant the Soviet Government a long-term credit of not less than 200 million RM;

b) we fulfil the Soviet Government's desires regarding the delivery of certain high-grade German products, including armaments.

3) Consequently, negotiations with the Soviet Government were opened in Moscow in February of this year,<sup>1</sup> with the object of securing Soviet deliveries of raw materials to the value of 300 million RM in the course of the next two years. At the same time, the Soviet Government were offered on the German side a six-year credit of 200 million RM at 5 per cent interest and the Soviet Government were to be given the opportunity of placing orders in Germany within two years on the basis of this credit.

4) In reply to this German proposal, the Soviet Government stated that in the next two years they could only deliver raw materials to Germany to the value of 100 million RM. In the course of the negotiations we eventually succeeded in obtaining from the Soviet Government the assurance that they would increase their offer of raw materials to 160 million RM.

5) In connection with the credit, the Soviet Government insisted on a minimum sum of 200 million RM and demanded a period of validity of seven years at  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent interest. Moreover, they wished to have the opportunity of placing orders in Germany on the basis of the credit within eighteen months.

The Soviet Government, on the other hand, have dropped their original demand to pay for German deliveries with bearer bonds or with composite bills and, in accordance with our request, have declared themselves prepared to issue bills for each separate transaction.

6) On the resumption of the negotiations we must first of all attempt to increase the latest Soviet offer of raw materials. The wishes of the Reich Minister of Economics and the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan are that the deliveries of raw materials offered by the Russians, amounting to 160 million RM, should be increased by 30 million RM in gold (in terms of raw materials). Whether this will be successfully achieved in the negotiations is very doubtful. It is probable that the Soviet Government will obstinately adhere to their offer of February. Should they, in the course of the negotiations, be prepared to increase it, this increase will probably not be on the scale desired by us.

On other points, rate of interest, etc., a compromise will be attainable.

7) We must realize that another breakdown in the negotiations would put an end to our efforts to place economic relations with the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 486-495.

Soviet Union on a broader basis again. Politically, too, a breakdown in the negotiations would mean a considerable setback. Consequently, in the event of my being sent to Moscow we shall still, for economic and political reasons, have to reach agreement with the Russians even if a substantial increase in the Russian offer of last February should not be obtained, unless the political situation were to be changed decisively in the meantime by the signature of the Anglo-Soviet pact of alliance.

SCHNURRE

### No. 531

8361/E590562-63

#### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 204 of June 16

WASHINGTON, June 16, 1939—2:33 a.m.

Received June 17—12:20 a.m.

Pol. VIII 954.

American public opinion is much concerned with the Anglo-Japanese conflict in Tientsin.<sup>1</sup> Japanese action is thought to be forcing Britain and France to take energetic counter-measures not only in order to defend their privileged position in China, which admittedly can scarcely be maintained in the long run, but above all to preserve their authority in their other possessions in Asia. Further, since America has no settlements in China, and no colonial interests in the Far East, American policy cannot be coordinated with Anglo-French policy in the dispute over the settlement[s] in Tientsin. However, increased alertness is thought to be required because the European situation and the conflict in the Far East are closely linked and because of the possibility that the totalitarian States will exploit for their own plans an Anglo-Franco-Japanese entanglement.

According to the scanty information available to me, the American Government will probably support Britain and France in the energetic protests addressed to Japan. But beyond this they will proceed cautiously and await events, and in particular they will not accede to the British request for a threat of American sanctions against Japanese trade and shipping. Since, in view of Japan's stiff-necked attitude, a violent clash with Britain and France on the one side and Japan on the other is expected here, Hull is said to be resolved, in accordance with the policy he has pursued towards Japan hitherto, to keep the United States temporarily in the background during the present crisis.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 526.

## No. 532

103/111480

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Moscow, June 16, 1939—1:08 p.m.

No. 103 of June 16

Received June 16—3:15 p.m.

With reference to my despatch No. A 1231 of June 15.<sup>1</sup>

On its front page, and specially emphasized by banner headlines, today's *Izvestia* published a unilateral official communiqué<sup>2</sup> on the conversation that took place on June 15 between Molotov and Potemkin on the one hand and the British and French Ambassadors and Strang on the other: The conversation lasted for over two hours. The principal questions on which differences of opinion exist were examined. Texts of Anglo-French formulae were handed to Molotov. The results of the first conversation and of the examination of the Anglo-French formulae were regarded as not entirely favourable in the circles of the Foreign Commissariat.

TIPPELSKIRCH

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2770/536840). This despatch reported Strang's arrival in Moscow on June 14.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 66.

## No. 533

1625/338384-65

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey*

Telegram

No. 142

BERLIN, June 16, 1939—7:05 p.m.

zu Pol. II 2063 Ang. II.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

With reference to your telegram No. 191.<sup>1</sup>

If, as Numan told you, Turkey does not intend to bring the Balkans into the Anglo-French pact, it is not comprehensible why the Franco-Turkish declaration is to be identical with the Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12 and why it is only in the speech by the President of the Chamber accompanying the declaration that the special function of the Balkan Pact is to be mentioned. Rather, the intention to proceed in this way seems largely to justify doubts as to the sincerity of the assurances given you by Numan. The omission of paragraph 6 of the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 518.



Declaration of May 12<sup>2</sup> could alone be regarded here as proof that Turkey is at least giving up the attempt to draw, in concert with the Western Powers, other States of the Balkan Entente also into the encirclement action against the Axis Powers. Since, according to your telegram No. 189,<sup>3</sup> Gafencu too has made efforts in this direction, Turkey knows that, by deleting paragraph 6, she would be conforming to the wishes of her partners in the Balkan Entente, and it should not be difficult for her to give the Western Powers a reason for such deletion. You are therefore requested to make it perfectly clear in Ankara that in any case we expect paragraph 6 of the Declaration of May 12 to be deleted from the Franco-Turkish declaration.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> For the wording of this paragraph see document No. 474, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 513.

## No. 534

230/151963-64

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

BELGRADE, June 16, 1939—9:05 p.m.

No. 189 of June 16

Received June 17—6:30 a.m.

With reference to your instructions Pol. IV 626 of June 12.<sup>1</sup>

On the occasion of my call on the Foreign Minister today I turned the conversation—making use of the ideas expressed in Megerle's<sup>2</sup> article in the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung* of June 13—to the subject of the League of Nations being compromised by the encirclement Powers, and I asked, in this connection, if an early decision on the withdrawal of Yugoslavia was to be expected. Cincar-Marković replied that this question had been discussed in detail in Berlin with the Führer and the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>3</sup> Yugoslavia had lost confidence in the League of Nations years ago, and by the dissolution of her Delegation had already largely dissociated herself from it. Yugoslavia, however, was at present on the Council of the League of Nations not only in her own name, but also as the mandatory of Rumania, and therefore she could take no action in this matter without consulting Rumania. He had promised the Reich Foreign Minister in Berlin to expedite the matter as much as possible. He would keep his word, but in the existing circumstances he needed sufficient time for preparation. He had, moreover, gathered from the conversation in Berlin that this was more an

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Leader writer of the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 474.

Italian than a German wish. Italy thought that she must still demand proofs of Yugoslav friendship, although Yugoslavia had already given the best proof by her attitude during the occupation of Albania.<sup>4</sup>

In conclusion Cincar-Marković emphasized the great advantage, to the Axis Powers as well, of close relations being maintained between Yugoslavia and Rumania, since therein lay the best guarantee against Rumania's drifting away from the policy of neutrality. He said that this advantage had just been demonstrated in Ankara where, at his instigation, Gafencu had persuaded Turkey to forgo any inclusion of the Balkans in the Anglo-Turkish pact.

HEEREN

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<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 191.

## No. 535

174/135969

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 16, 1939.

St.S. No. 491

On the basis of information from the Japanese Ambassador in Rome, Shiratori,<sup>1</sup> the Italian Ambassador yesterday evening gave me the present Japanese version of the alliance as follows:<sup>2</sup>

1) Open treaty with alliance obligations absolutely automatic in all cases of war.

2) Secret protocol whereby no automatic obligations under the alliance arise as long as the two Pacific Powers, the USA and Soviet Russia, are not belligerents.

Attolico thinks that Shiratori's version was perhaps not made quite clear here by Oshima. Attolico intends to give Herr Sthamer<sup>3</sup> still further details.

Attolico is inclined to regard this latest phase as tolerably satisfactory and doubts whether Tokyo can make any further concessions.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Shiratori was at this time in Berlin; see document No. 524.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 538 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 254, where the text of a draft treaty is also given.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably Heinrich Stahmer, at this time Hauptreferent in the Dienststelle Ribbentrop; later Ambassador to the puppet Chinese Government in Nanking January 1942; succeeded Ott as Ambassador in Japan, February 1943.

## No. 536

2/225594-OS

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

ROME, June 16, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: In my telegram No. 252 of June 13,<sup>1</sup> on that part of my conversation with the Duce which deals with the Soviets, I mentioned that in the course of the conversation he also quoted the Russian Counsellor of Embassy, Helfand, in confirmation of the accuracy of his remarks on the further development of the Anglo-Russian negotiations. Though he described Helfand as a "Halbjuden"<sup>2</sup> (he used this German expression, while otherwise he spoke exclusively in Italian), he seemed to have a high opinion of his intellectual capacity which was clearly shared by Ciano. During the conversation I had a fleeting impression that a personal meeting, even, between Helfand and Ciano must have taken place recently. This assumption does not, however, seem to be correct. Rather, I think I can say with some degree of certainty that Helfand's relations, undoubtedly active, with the Palazzo Chigi are through Virginio Gayda,<sup>3</sup> because, during a conversation we had yesterday at the Hungarian Legation which touched on the question of the development of Anglo-Russian relations, Gayda mentioned that he hoped to have a clearer picture of this in the next few days, as he was going to meet Helfand "once again" for an informal supper! I am writing this because it seems to prove, for one thing, that in accordance with the Milan conversations,<sup>4</sup> those in authority here are treating the Russians here with much solicitude; but also because it lends significance to certain information which reached me today through our confidant, known to you, on statements made by Helfand in confidence, possibly again to Gayda. I append it herewith in the form in which it was given to me by the confidant and request that it be treated as confidential accordingly.

The confidant confirmed the Duce's final remark to me in his recent conversation, that, according to the view held here, Soviet Russia would not undertake any military action outside her own frontier. For the confidant observed, in connection with this subject, that in the Palazzo Chigi, and incidentally also in the Italian General Staff, the view was held that Soviet Russia was militarily valueless, that she would limit herself to the defence of her own territory and only take up arms on her own soil; moreover, that she had not the slightest interest in intervening immediately in the event of war, but would rather

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 523.<sup>2</sup> i.e., "Half-Jew".<sup>3</sup> Editor of the *Giornale d'Italia* since 1926.<sup>4</sup> See document No. 341.

bide her time until both adversaries had considerably weakened each other, so as to intervene militarily only when she felt she could count on the realization of her own aims and the revolutionizing of Europe.<sup>5</sup>

Best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

MACKENSEN

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "[For] F[ührer]" and initialled "R[ibbentrop]".

[Enclosure]

CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENTS MADE BY THE SOVIET CHARGÉ  
D'AFFAIRES IN ROME

1) If Chamberlain and Halifax imagined that by their recent statements in the House of Commons and the House of Lords<sup>6</sup> they could exercise any sort of blackmailing pressure on Moscow, their intention merely proved that they did not know Stalin's temperament at all. Stalin was not a man who could in any way be influenced by such petty means and methods.

2) Russia would remain completely unyielding on her demands over the Baltic States and press them with the greatest intransigence and, in fact, all the more obstinately because Germany's Non-Aggression Pacts with Latvia and Estonia<sup>7</sup> had come into being. These treaties had been concluded, so to speak, between cat and mouse.

3) Britain's chief anxiety was the situation in Europe. Soviet Russia, however, also had important problems in the Far East and would accordingly make no concessions in Europe as long as she did not have full security and "precise guarantees of her own interests, i.e., against Japan".

Moscow was already informed of a secret session in Tokyo. In this secret session decisions had been reached which would lead in the more or less near future to a military alliance between Japan and the Axis Powers. For Japan this alliance would be more anti-Russian than anti-British in character. Furthermore, it was known in Moscow that consultations had already been in progress for some time between the Japanese Ambassador in Rome and the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin. The potential alliance would probably be signed in Berlin itself. In view of this impending alliance Moscow would not be able to give way in her demands.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The reference appears to be to Lord Halifax's speeches on June 8 (see *Parl. Deb., H. of L.*, vol. 113, cols. 350-364) and on June 12 (see *ibid.*, cols. 428-437) and to Chamberlain's statement on June 7 (see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 348, cols. 400-402).

<sup>7</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note on this enclosure in Hewel's handwriting: "Submitted to F[ührer]. [?] 27/6/39."

## No. 537

174/135972

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, June 17, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

No. 191

With reference to your telegram No. 252.<sup>2</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

Please make it plain to the Japanese Navy through Admiral Foerster that only a perfectly clear alliance is calculated fully to ensure American neutrality.

As soon as Admiral Foerster has made these arguments clear to Japanese naval circles, there will be no objection to his departure.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (174/135970). In this telegram of June 16, Ott reported that, with the assistance of the Italian Ambassador, Admiral Foerster had, since June 2, had almost daily meetings with leading Japanese naval personages and had argued against over-estimation of the Anglo-American naval position. There appeared, therefore, to be no objection to his departure as planned on June 19.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 253 of June 19 (not printed, 174/135973) Ott replied that Foerster had spoken on these lines to the Vice Minister of Marine. Foerster was leaving Japan the same day.

## No. 538

100/64537-42

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 194 of June 17

BERLIN, June 17, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Only for the Ambassador personally.

1) Ambassador Oshima only informed me officially on June 14 of the latest decisions of his Government<sup>2</sup> on the question of an alliance, to the following effect:

Japan declared herself ready to support Germany and Italy, even in a war in which Soviet Russia did not take part, to make public her readiness to give such support, and to afford such military aid as lay within her power. In special exceptional cases it might, however, be in the common interests of the three Powers to make no use of Japan's

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded. The copy here printed is taken from the files of the German Ambassador to Rome, see footnote 4 below.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 487 and *D.D.L.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 236 and 254.

readiness to do this. In such cases the three Powers would have to consult together about the attitude of Japan. Japan did not intend, however, to limit the obligations undertaken in the treaty by reservations of any kind whatsoever. It could therefore be taken that the Japanese Government had firmly resolved to conclude the pact.

2) As mention of the possibility of exceptions in this Japanese communication might initially give rise to doubts, I insisted on the meaning of this part of the Japanese communication being made more precise. Thereupon Oshima and his colleagues here clearly and definitely stated that, according to instructions reaching them from Tokyo, this in no way implied any reservation by the Japanese Government. They wished, on the contrary, to accept the treaty and the two appended protocols as drafted,<sup>3</sup> without restriction. Neither did they wish to make any declaration limiting these. They had only wished to raise the possibility that, in certain circumstances, the three Powers might be agreed on a special attitude to be adopted by Japan in case of a conflict. There would, however, be no question of the Japanese Government claiming of their own accord exemption from the automatic operation of the obligation to lend support. The mention of the possibility of such exceptional cases meant nothing more than what was provided for in the second paragraph of Article III of the treaty and point A of the secret additional protocol and was not designed to add anything fresh to these provisions. The mention of exceptional cases had therefore really no special significance and altered nothing in the Japanese Government's decision to accept without restriction or reservation the obligation to lend support provided for in the treaty.

3) I took note of this explanation of the instructions from the Japanese Government, and then asked Oshima further what the Japanese Government had now decided about the two points still left open, namely:

a) On the draft of a note, to be handed over by the Japanese Ambassador before the signature of the Treaty, regarding possible observations by the Japanese Government in reply to diplomatic enquiries;

b) On the draft of a formulated statement on Japan's limited military capacities to be made orally by the Japanese Ambassador likewise before signature.

Here I observed for my part, in respect of point A) that, according to the information now given us, the Japanese Government were in complete agreement with the form we had proposed for the diplomatic statements they would make, and that they must give up the form of language which they proposed to hold, whereby the treaty

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 383.

was more or less clearly represented as applicable only to war with Soviet Russia. In respect of point B) I stressed that our draft of a formulated oral statement was the utmost that Germany and Italy could accept. A formal written exchange of notes on Japan's limited military capacity was unacceptable to us.

Oshima shared my views on point A). On point B) he said that unfortunately the Japanese Government still held that they could not be content with an oral statement but that this statement must be rendered in the form of an exchange of notes.

I then made it perfectly clear to him that this was completely unacceptable to Germany and Italy. We were fully aware of Japan's present military situation and had always emphasized during negotiations that we did not expect any military action by Japan which went beyond these possibilities. All details in this respect were reserved for the discussions provided for in the secret additional protocol, so that Japan was still not binding herself to any definite action under the treaty itself. A separate formal declaration by Japan was therefore in itself altogether superfluous. However, we could finally accept it, provided it were made orally in the form suggested by us, because that said nothing except what had already always been said and determined by both sides during the negotiations. A formal exchange of notes, however, would give the matter a completely different character. We would then have two parallel instruments side by side. In the one, Japan would bind herself to lend support; in the other it would be simultaneously laid down that Japan was not in a position to lend this support either at present or in the immediate future. That would reverse the purpose of the treaty. It could certainly be taken for granted that such an exchange of notes would become known. After all, the Japanese Government attached importance to it in order to make use of it in their Diet or elsewhere against their opponents. But as soon as a wider circle of people knew about it, strict secrecy would be quite impossible. Hostile propaganda would then quite rightly describe the whole treaty as worthless. It was also impossible, particularly from the Japanese point of view, thus to make the weakness of Japan's position formally manifest.

As far as he was concerned, Oshima agreed that this line of argument was entirely correct. He had sent a telegram to Tokyo explaining our point of view about the exchange of notes and also requesting that the sense of the latest instructions from the Japanese Government, as stated during the conversations here, be again confirmed.

4) As the Japanese Ambassador in Rome, Shiratori, is at present in Berlin, I also arranged yesterday for a discussion with him, the Italian Ambassador, and Oshima. In this connection, Shiratori stated fairly definitely that, from the fact that Tokyo was still clinging so obstinately to an exchange of notes on Japan's limited military capacity, he

for his part was bound to draw the conclusion that his Government still had certain "mental reservations" about the alliance. He was therefore sceptical as to whether his Government would take account of our point of view, which he himself entirely shared. In these circumstances he himself had been wondering whether it would not be possible, in order to prevent a breakdown of the negotiations, to lay down categorically in a secret protocol that the Japanese obligation to lend support would only become operative automatically if either Soviet Russia or America took part in the war, and that if, on the other hand, both States remained neutral, Japan's attitude would have to be determined by consultation between the three Powers. In this way Germany and Italy would at any rate gain this much, that the treaty would contribute substantially towards keeping America and Soviet Russia from participating in a European conflict.

I rejected this idea as impossible with the greatest determination. If Japan made such a reservation, Germany and Italy would naturally be forced to make the corresponding reservation that their obligation to lend support to Japan would enter into force automatically only in the event of the participation of Britain or France in the war. Then we would have a treaty shorn of its real political effect. Only a perfectly clear alliance and not one designed to cover individual eventualities in war, would have the effect of inducing America and Soviet Russia to keep out of the war. If Japan really could not make up her mind to such an alliance, then it would be for consideration whether the treaty could not be dispensed with altogether.

5) You are requested also to put forward the point of view I have adopted, in your own conversations. But please do not mention or discuss the last proposal referred to above and put forward personally by Shiratori unless it should be raised with you in some way by the Japanese themselves in Tokyo.<sup>4</sup>

RIBBENTROP

<sup>4</sup> In a letter of June 20 (not printed, 100/64535) Weizsäcker sent Mackensen a copy of this telegram, only for his own personal information, adding that Attolico was informed and that it was agreed that the negotiations should only be conducted in Berlin. In a letter of June 26 in reply (not printed, 100/64536) Mackensen wrote that, since his return from Berlin, Shiratori had expressed some scepticism about the prospects.

## No. 539

1025/388906

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 493

BERLIN, June 17, 1939.

Pol. II 2138.

During a private conversation outside the Ministry, the French Ambassador yesterday spoke to me in terms similar to those used re-



cently by Henderson.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, he said that once the Anglo-Franco-Russian pact was concluded, diplomatic conversations between the Axis and the Western Powers could take place more easily than at present.

I expressed doubts as to this; to threaten us with the Russians was to employ unsuitable means, and we ourselves were an unsuitable target for threats. Intimidation produced on us the opposite effect to that desired.

The Ambassador then elucidated his original remark by saying that it was much easier for two partners to talk when they had already taken up their positions than if they did not know from where they started.

I then told the French Ambassador that, if peace was in danger, this rested with the Poles, who saw fit to play fast and loose with their French and British friends.

Coulondre, for his part, doubted whether the official Polish policy were directed towards a conflict. He said that what was most important in the coming months was to avoid incidents which might prove too strong for the unanimous official desire for peace.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 521.

<sup>2</sup> See also the *French Yellow Book*, No. 139.

## No. 540

34/23202-04

### *Memorandum by Ambassador Schulenburg*

SECRET

BERLIN,<sup>1</sup> June 17, 1939.

e.o. W 923 g.

I paid the customary visit to the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Astakhov, at midday today. Immediately after the introductory remarks, M. Astakhov expressed his satisfaction that the political atmosphere between our two countries was gradually improving. I agreed with this and said that recently the German press had surely given the Soviet Government scarcely any cause for complaint. The tone of the Soviet press had also improved; thus for example the formerly usual unfriendly caricatures had disappeared; on the other hand lapses could still be detected both in the press and on the radio. At this M. Astakhov said that it took time in the Soviet Union to get instructions of this sort through to the lowest levels.

Astakhov then brought the conversation round to his latest interview with the State Secretary.<sup>2</sup> His account convinced me that he

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<sup>1</sup> Schulenburg was at this time in Berlin to report. See document No. 499.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 451.

had correctly understood and had also transmitted all that the State Secretary had told him. In answer to my question why he was still owing us the reply we were awaiting (on the proposed duration of the activities of the Trade Delegation in Prague and the prospect Astakhov had held out of an explanation of Molotov's statements about the interrelation of politics and economics in Russo-German relations), he said that he had had a communication from Moscow to the effect that the reply was to be given to me in Moscow. I said that I thought it would be useful if the reply which the Soviets intended to make were to come soon. Astakhov said he would telegraph immediately that the reply had been expected here. Just as he had recently told the Bulgarian Minister,<sup>3</sup> so, on this occasion, M. Astakhov said to me that the statements made by the State Secretary had really been rather vague and couched in very general terms. I replied to M. Astakhov that in my opinion the statements made by the State Secretary had been perfectly clear, in the sense that we, for our part, were also ready for a return to normal and an improvement in our relations, such as Ambassador Merekalov had indicated.<sup>4</sup> Russia had to make her choice. I added that the State Secretary's conversation was intended as a reply to my interview with M. Molotov;<sup>5</sup> that, on that occasion, M. Molotov too had not made himself at all clear, and that therefore it had been difficult for the State Secretary to express himself more concretely.

Astakhov repeatedly spoke of the great mistrust which naturally still prevailed in Moscow and which would have first to be overcome. Incidentally, he stated quite frankly that good German-Soviet relations could not but be advantageous to both countries, for the whole course of history had shown that Germany and Russia had always done well when they had been friends, and badly when they had been enemies. In this connection I once more drew Astakhov's attention to the importance of the resumption of economic negotiations.

The conversation did not touch on wider problems (Japan, Poland, German-Soviet treaties). In accordance with instructions<sup>6</sup> I kept within the limits described above.

SCHULENBURG<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 529.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 215.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 424, enclosure.

<sup>6</sup> No other record of these instructions has been found.

<sup>7</sup> For a report by the Italian Ambassador in Moscow, Rosso, of Schulenburg's account of this conversation to him, see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 386.

## No. 541

F6/0339-42

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division VII*BERLIN, June 20, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Pol. VII 1058.

RECORD OF THE RECEPTION OF THE ROYAL COUNSELLOR KHALID AL HUD AL GARGANI, THE SPECIAL ENVOY OF KING ABDUL AZIZ IBN SAUD.<sup>2</sup>

At 3:15 p.m. on Saturday June 17, the reception ordered by the Führer for the Saudi-Arabian Special Envoy, Khalid al Hud, took place at the Berghof.

Khalid al Hud first gave an address in Arabic, the translation of which is appended,<sup>3</sup> and which contained the substance of King Ibn Saud's letter to the Führer.<sup>4</sup> After his address he handed over the letter. During the ensuing conversation, the Führer stated that we entertained warm sympathies for the Arabs for two reasons: 1) because we had no territorial aspirations in Arabia, and 2) because we had the same enemies. After some further statements, he added: 3) because we were jointly fighting the Jews. This led him to discuss Palestine and conditions there, and he then stated that he himself would not rest until the last Jew had left Germany. Khalid al Hud observed that the Prophet Mohammed, who, apart from having been a religious leader, had also been a great statesman, had acted in the same way. He had driven all the Jews out of Arabia. Only one lived in Saudi Arabia today, and he had attempted to take the armaments transactions away from the Government and had been sentenced to three years' imprisonment for this. The Führer repeatedly assured the Envoy of his sympathies for the King too, and stated that, beyond this, he was prepared to give "active assistance".

The conversation was then continued at the tea-table. The Führer referred to the strong predilection which he had always had for the Arab world, gathered from his reading, since his childhood. The idea, introduced by Khalid al Hud into the discussion, was enlarged upon, namely what would have become of Europe if Charles Martel had not beaten back the Saracens, but if the latter, imbued with the Germanic spirit and borne along by Germanic dynamism, had transformed Islam in their own fashion. The Führer described this line of thought as very remarkable.

Leave was taken of Khalid al Hud shortly after four o'clock.

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 422 and 498.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (8362/E590593-95). The letter is dated March 27, 1939.

I had the impression that the Führer was pleased with the Envoy's manner; in any case the Envoy himself was delighted with his reception, and said so in no uncertain terms, and, as he told me, has so informed his sovereign.

The foreign press is devoting much space to this reception today,<sup>5</sup> after innumerable telephone calls from foreign news agencies to the Press Department yesterday. The Italian press in particular regards it as a blow to Britain, and adds the hitherto unconfirmed and improbable report that the King's son, Feisal, who serves as his Foreign Minister, has made a number of demands to Britain also concerning Palestine, which are described in the headlines as an ultimatum. Khalid al Hud has no such information.<sup>6</sup> It seems to me more likely to be designed by the Italians to commit us to a more active policy in the Near East.

In accordance with King Ibn Saud's wishes, and after a preparatory interdepartmental consultation with the Economic Policy Department, our assistance will initially consist of a comparatively quite modest credit of about 1½ million Reichsmark,<sup>7</sup> for the immediate purchase of 8,000 rifles and 8 million rounds of ammunition, and a small munitions factory which is to be built in the interior of the country. In addition there will be light anti-aircraft guns and armoured cars. The preparations for these deliveries are being discussed with the competent departments. They can be concluded immediately after the receipt of Rome's views, which we have requested.<sup>8</sup>

HENTIG<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 50 of June 20 (1605/385606) Grobba asked that press comment should be kept to a minimum as Ibn Saud attached great importance to the negotiations not attracting attention.

<sup>6</sup> In a further brief memorandum of June 20 (not printed, 1605/385605) Hentig described him as thinking it "highly improbable".

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note on another copy of this memorandum (1605/385603-04): "Khalid al Hud has meanwhile not inconsiderably increased his credit demands to 6 million Reichsmark. The negotiations are continuing. H[entig] 30/6."

<sup>8</sup> In despatch No. 4765 of June 14 (not printed, 1605/385575-76) Mackensen had reported that the matter had been raised with the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In a memorandum of July 14 (not printed, 71/51492-93) Woermann recorded that Magistrati had read out to him a despatch received from his Government on their reply. This referred to a previous Italian protest on German arms being delivered to the Yemen, and whilst raising no objection to German deliveries to Saudi Arabia, expressed the hope that German and Italian supplies to Arabia could be so arranged as to avoid mutual competition.

<sup>9</sup> On July 4 Hentig recorded (not printed, 1605/385625-26) a discussion he had had with a representative of Admiral Canaris on how to fulfil the promise to Ibn Saud of a gift of 4,000 rifles, which a marginal note by Woermann dated July 12, states was subsequently arranged with Admiral Canaris and General Keitel. A letter to Khalid al Hud (not printed, 1605/385644-46) was drafted to inform him of this intended gift and to offer a credit of RM 6 million at 6 per cent interest for the purchase of war material, but in a minute of July 15 (not printed, 1605/385636) Woermann gave instructions that the letter was to be amended to omit all mention of the rifles, to be written on unheaded paper and to have no signature, in view of the possibility of its falling into unauthorized hands, as Khalid al Hud was intending to visit Paris. A marginal note by Schlobies records that the amended letter (not printed, 1605/385637-40) was given to Khalid al Hud on July 18. A memorandum by Woermann of Sept. 7, 1939, (not printed, 71/51494), indicates that Khalid al Hud passed through Berlin on his return to Saudi Arabia. No further documents on this subject have been found.

## No. 542

3039/800585

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 190 of June 18

BUDAPEST, June 18, 1939—12:50 p.m.

Received June 18—3:50 p.m.

Pol. IV 3713.

With reference to your telegram No. 175.<sup>1</sup>

Instructions carried out.

The Foreign Minister replied that at present Hungary's relations with Turkey were perhaps worse than Germany's, since Turkey, to whom he in no way conceded a position of supremacy in the Balkans, was endeavouring at the moment to bring Yugoslavia and Rumania closer together against Hungary. Nevertheless, because the Rumanian Foreign Minister was just then paying a visit to Turkey, he had thought it right, both in the interests of Hungary and of the Axis Powers, to make use of the Turkish Government as an instrument for crushing hostile efforts to align Bulgaria with the Balkan Pact.

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Not printed: see document No. 519, footnote 4.

## No. 543

103/111436-40

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

Moscow, June 18, 1939.

D/261

W 950 g.

With reference to my telegram of June 17, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Conversation with the Commissar for Foreign Trade, Mikoyan, on June 17, 1939.

Enclosed, I am sending a memorandum by Counsellor Hilger on his conversation with the Commissar for Foreign Trade, Mikoyan, on June 17, 1939. The fact that Mikoyan received Herr Hilger immediately after his arrival, after an appointment had been made on the day

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (103/111435). In this telegram, No. 105, Tippelskirch gave a preliminary account of Hilger's conversation with Mikoyan. In telegram No. 128 of June 20 (103/111444), Wiesel replied to this telegram as follows: "If Mikoyan, during your next interview, again puts questions about details of the German position, please point out that you are not empowered to discuss this, but that, on the contrary, we attach importance to discussing details with the Soviet representatives during the prospective negotiations. We do not regard it as expedient to discuss, in preliminary conversations, matters which are themselves to be the subject of the negotiations."

before,<sup>2</sup> shows that Mikoyan is anxious not to lose contact. That Mikoyan would immediately accept the German proposal could hardly be expected, in view of the mentality of the Soviet Government, who are at present riding a high horse, and their known methods of negotiation. The continuously recurring assertion of Mikoyan's, that he suspects a political game behind our offer of negotiation, may not be due only to tactical motives, but may partly reflect his true opinion. Mikoyan seems to believe that we have deliberately chosen the present time for economic negotiations. This becomes clear also from his remark that we expect an advantage from a resumption of the economic negotiations just at the present time.

It is a remarkable *nuance* that Mikoyan in his answer uses the same wording as the communiqué published on June 16 on the first conversation of Molotov with the British and French Ambassadors and Strang.<sup>3</sup> In this, as well as in the other case, the result is called "not entirely favourable".

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 499, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 532.

[Enclosure 1]

MEMORANDUM

SECRET

Moscow, June 17, 1939:

D/261

Subject: Conversation with Mikoyan on June 17, 1939.

After the Embassy had made an appointment, People's Commissar Mikoyan received me today immediately after my return from Berlin.

I explained to Mikoyan the purpose of my trip and pointed out the unfavourable impression which his latest communication, of June 8,<sup>4</sup> had made on us. At the same time I asked him to consider the fact of my trip to Berlin and the answer of the German Government which I had brought with me as an additional proof of the seriousness of our intentions with respect to the expansion and extension of German-Soviet economic relations. Thereupon I read to M. Mikoyan the text of the German answer that had been given to me in Berlin (cf. enclosure). The People's Commissar listened with profound attention while Babarin, newly appointed Deputy Trade Representative in Berlin, who was present at the conversation, busily wrote down every word. The People's Commissar appeared to be visibly impressed with the German answer. Nevertheless, he declared after a short pause that the German answer had disappointed him, since it did not meet his conditions.

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 499; see also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 201.

On the basis of the instructions received in Berlin on this subject, I then commented on the contents of the German answer in great detail. I stressed particularly how extremely forthcoming the Germans were showing themselves in sending Counsellor Schnurre and in accepting the latest Soviet proposal<sup>5</sup> as a basis for negotiations. I reminded the People's Commissar that, during the negotiations in February, he did not describe the latest Soviet proposal as his last word, but as the basis for further negotiations. I further reminded him of his statement in the conversation of June 8 in which he had declared that the Soviet Government would see in the despatch of Herr Schnurre proof that the German Government were also serious in the matter of "politics".

Mikoyan replied that my two last statements corresponded entirely with the facts and that I had repeated his statements correctly. Nevertheless, he still did not believe he could be sure that it was not for us a question of continuing a political game in which the Germans had an interest just at the present moment, and from which they apparently expected to reap advantages.

To this I replied sharply that I had already often enough rejected his assertions about the political game we were supposed to be playing and that they would not become more convincing by continuous repetition. I was quite unable to understand what risk for the Soviet Union the People's Commissar saw in the whole matter, since it was not the Soviet Government who were sending a special delegate to Berlin, but the German Government who were sending Herr Schnurre to Moscow, and were doing so in agreement with the request expressed by the Soviet Government in January of this year.<sup>6</sup>

M. Mikoyan replied that this statement by me was also correct, since the Soviet Government at that time had expressed the specific desire to conduct the negotiations in Moscow.

Thereupon I told the People's Commissar that I was completely in the dark as to what he then really wanted from us, and what sort of answer he had expected from the German Government.

Mikoyan replied that he had expected concrete statements as to which points of his latest proposal we would, and which we would not, accept.

I told the People's Commissar that this was clearly apparent from the German answer and from my oral explanations of today. Therefore I would like to repeat for the third time that, after the existing obstacles had been removed by us, we definitely expected from the Soviet Government agreement to our wishes and an increase in the Soviet offer of raw materials. All other less important points would have to be left to the negotiations suggested by us. This offer from us

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<sup>5</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 491.

<sup>6</sup> See *ibid.*, documents Nos. 483-485.

represented the furthest we could go to meet them. If on this basis we did not soon arrive at concrete negotiations, responsibility would fall fairly and squarely upon the Soviet Government.

Thereupon the People's Commissar declared that he regretted he could not change his opinion that the German answer was "not entirely favourable". Nevertheless he would present it to his Government and inform me of the result.

HILGER

[Enclosure 2]

SECRET

The German Government are willing to send Counsellor Schnurre to Moscow with full power to negotiate on expanding and strengthening economic relations between the Reich and the Soviet Union and, if a common basis is found, to conclude an agreement. From the fact of our sending a German plenipotentiary as negotiator we beg the Soviet Government to conclude that the German Government expect and desire a positive conclusion on a broadened basis. We should have to refuse acceptance in advance of the Soviet counter proposal of February 1939, however, since it is precisely this counter proposal which is to be the subject of the negotiations. The Soviet Government, however, should note that in the meantime we have endeavoured to remove obstacles which in February still appeared to us as insurmountable. However, we expect the Soviet Government also to re-examine Soviet raw material deliveries in the light of German desires, in order to establish a balance of services rendered under the future treaty.

No. 544

3039/600588

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 191

BELGRADE, June 19, 1939—1:15 p.m.

Received June 19—5:35 p.m.

Pol. IV 3734.

With reference to your telegram No. 166 of June 17.<sup>1</sup>

1) The Hungarian Minister is on leave at present so that I could not get into touch with him about the possibility of my referring to his conversation with the State Secretary<sup>2</sup> when I see the Foreign Minister.

2) The Yugoslav desire for a Hungaro-Rumanian and Bulgaro-Rumanian settlement undoubtedly exists, since Yugoslav policy

<sup>1</sup> Not printed. See document No. 519, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> Miloje Smiljanić, Director of the Political Department in the Yugoslav Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and acting Deputy Foreign Minister.



towards Hungary and Bulgaria would be aided thereby. That there is also a hope here of Yugoslavia finding support for her own policy of neutrality towards the Great Powers in this closer political collaboration with Hungary and Bulgaria clearly emerges from the semi-official comment on Horthy's speech of June 14,<sup>3</sup> published in yesterday's *Politika*. In this Horthy's friendly words about Yugoslavia are seen as warranting the hope that the time is now ripe for close collaboration between Hungary, Yugoslavia, Rumania and the other neighbouring States—a collaboration which might have immeasurable consequences for the progress of these countries and for safeguarding peace.

HEEREN

<sup>3</sup> In his address to the newly elected Parliament, Horthy, dealing with Hungary's foreign relations, said that she was keenly interested in anything which might create an atmosphere of confidence and trust between her and Yugoslavia.

## No. 545

136/73786

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 497

BERLIN, June 19, 1939.

I told the Italian Ambassador today that, admittedly, we had set ourselves no concrete aims as regards Spain beyond the present as yet unratified secret Treaty of Friendship.<sup>1</sup> But Ambassador von Stohrer had been instructed further to strengthen relations with Spain as far as possible.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 773.

<sup>2</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 284 from which it appears that Stohrer had just left Berlin. No German record of his visit has been found.

## No. 546

F1/0294

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, June 19, 1939.

St.S. No. 499

As you are aware the Italian Ambassador recently transmitted to Rome the oral German reply to the latest personal letter from the Duce to the Führer.<sup>1</sup> He now tells me today that he has been instructed to reply as follows:

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 459, enclosure, and document No. 527, with footnote 8 thereto. According to Attolico's record of the reply given him orally by Ribbentrop on June 6 (see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 130) Hitler's suggestion had been for a possible meeting on the Brenner; as to the date, Ribbentrop had referred in general terms to "this summer". In St.S. No. 520 of June 29 (not printed, 483/231543) Weizsäcker recorded that in Attolico's personal opinion the first week in August was particularly suitable for the meeting.

The Führer's suggestion for a meeting with Mussolini had naturally been most cordially received by the latter. As to the date, Rome—without pressing the matter in any way—was expecting a proposal from Germany.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (i) In Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]" and, across the face of the document, "Brenner, remind in 14 days". (ii) "The Foreign Minister has discussed the matter. [E.] K[ordt] 5/7."

## No. 547

2897/565641

### *The High Command of the Army to the Foreign Ministry*

Att. Gr. V Gen. St. d. H.  
No. 1387.

BERLIN, June 19, 1939.

Received June 20.

Pol. V 5635.

Subject: The Free State of Danzig.

The officers named in the enclosure<sup>1</sup> have been granted permission to travel through the Free State of Danzig in civilian clothes on a tour for study purposes arranged by the Military Academy.

Please inform the Senate of the Free City of Danzig if necessary.<sup>2</sup>

By order:

V. ALBEDYLL

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2897/565642-46). This listed altogether 168 persons.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of this letter and its enclosure were forwarded, under a formal cover note of June 22 (not printed, 8358/E590547), to the Consulate General in Danzig.

## No. 548

174/135974

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, June 20, 1939—8:45 p.m.

SECRET

No. 257 of June 20

Received June 20—5:30 p.m.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 194 of [June] 17.<sup>1</sup>

1) The comprehensive information from the Reich Foreign Minister has enabled me to start individual conversations in order to put forward your point of view and to clear up any "mental reservations" on the part of the Japanese Government. The divergent views of the two

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 538.

Ambassadors, described in your telegram, reflect the contradictory interpretations which I encountered among my confidants during the various phases. The Minister President and the Army interpreted the repeated resolutions and their future effect in a strongly favourable sense, while confidants from the Foreign Ministry and political circles regularly stressed the restrictive meaning of the reservations.

2) As to Japan's entry into a war in which Soviet Russia is not engaged, I reported, in telegram No. 238,<sup>2</sup> on the basis of information from Army circles, about a *fundamental* reservation in the Japanese Government's decision, which corresponds more closely to Shiratori's personal ideas than to Oshima's explanation of his instructions.

3) Oshima's telegram in reply is said to have startled the Cabinet as permitting it to be clearly seen that there were substantial Japanese reservations of an unsatisfactory character. Consultations by the Five Ministers' Conference are to be resumed.

4) Tientsin<sup>3</sup> occupies the foreground at present. In this connection the Army and the confidant from the Foreign Ministry emphasize that an Army success in these proceedings would commit Japan against Britain to such an extent that the Army's point of view would inevitably carry the day in the alliance question as well. In view of the practical importance of the Tientsin proceedings for the alliance, and the fact that the forces arrayed against the alliance are also beginning to apply the brakes in the Tientsin question, I would beg you to consider whether giving the Japanese Embassy moral support would not be expedient for the action and thereby for the advocates of the alliance.

OTT

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 487.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 526.

## No. 549

119/119121

### *The Head of the Auslandsorganisation to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 303 of June 20

BERLIN, June 20, 1939—8:45 p.m.

For the Landesgruppe

In view of the case of Ortsgruppenleiter Kauffmann in Bolzano<sup>1</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 260 of June 17 (not printed, 2984/584512-13) Mackensen had reported that Kauffmann had been arrested for organizing a route march in defiance of the local Prefect. The question of securing his release and avoiding unpleasant press publicity had been taken up officially by the Embassy and by Mackensen personally with Ciano. The latter had said Mussolini was concerning himself with the case, of which he took a serious view, regarding it as further proof of the subversive activities of former Austrians in the region and the need for speeding up their removal. An inflammatory anti-Italian leaflet was also in extensive circulation. On Mackensen minimizing the importance of the Kauffmann case, Ciano had intervened directly with Mussolini and promptly secured Kauffmann's release. See also document No. 560.

issue instructions for immediate orders to be given to all Ortsgruppen and all branches in Italy, and especially in the former South Tyrol, that in no circumstances whatsoever must any friction or differences with the Italian authorities or with private persons arise in the question of the South Tyrol. Hoheitsträger are in all cases to impress on Reich Germans that they must give unqualified support to the view that the renunciation of the South Tyrol is final, and must also follow this line in conversations with everyone.

BOHLE

## No. 550

1625/388914-15

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, June 20, 1939.

Pol. II 2177.

The Greek Minister,<sup>1</sup> who called on me in connection with another matter, turned the conversation to current political questions. I informed him about the statements made by the Greek Minister President<sup>2</sup> to our Minister on June 15, on the question of the inclusion of the Balkan States in the Turco-British system, in particular the statement that there would be no change in Greece's policy of strict neutrality (Athens telegram No. 54).<sup>3</sup> As I had already done recently to the Rumanian Minister, I expressed the anxiety that the encirclement Powers were seeking new ways and means of drawing the Balkan States into the encirclement system.<sup>4</sup> If the Balkan States were really to remain outside this system, it would be incomprehensible if the well-known paragraph 6 of the Anglo-Turkish Declaration,<sup>5</sup> under which the Balkan States are included in the security system, were incorporated in the impending Turco-French declaration. M. Rizo-Rangabé gave the following interpretation:

Paragraph 6 only contains the declaration that security must be established in the Balkans too and binds the Treaty Powers to enter into consultation on this matter. The results of this consultation would, however, be to establish that the security of the Balkans, apart from the guarantees already given, would be safeguarded by the Balkan Pact, and that therefore, beyond this Pact, the Balkan States would not enter into any new obligations or receive any new guarantees. I

<sup>1</sup> Alexandros Rizo-Rangabé.

<sup>2</sup> General Joannis Metaxas.

<sup>3</sup> Of June 16; not printed (2767/535907-08).

<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum of June 16 (not printed, 1625/388907-08) Woermann recorded expressing himself in similar terms to the Rumanian Minister. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 87.

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 483 and document No. 474, footnote 5.

told the Minister that I was aware of this interpretation; but in that case it would be incomprehensible if the old Anglo-Turkish formula, which allowed of quite different interpretations, were again to be included in the Franco-Turkish Declaration. The Minister again gave an assurance that Greece did not want to enter into any new commitments.

WOERMANN

## No. 551

43/20485-S6

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, June 20, 1939.

#### CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

A British journalist, who has just returned to his post in Berlin from a short fact-finding visit to London, has told other foreign correspondents that opposition in London to Chamberlain and Lord Halifax was again greatly on the increase, as a result of the long-drawn-out negotiations in Moscow and the difficulties in the Far East. The opposition front, ranging from the left-wing opposition to the dissatisfied element in the Government party, was gaining strength. There was a general conviction that in these difficult times Britain could no longer get on with a Cabinet of "old men". The obstinacy with which Chamberlain and his more intimate friends wanted to remain at their posts in the Cabinet was, however, astonishing. An early election was thought to be the only way of bringing about a radical change of Cabinet. Unless the international situation deteriorated dramatically, authoritative circles in London thought that there would be an election in the autumn.

There was very great dissatisfaction in London over the very difficult international situation. It was felt that British policy was falling, as it were, between two stools. The best thing would be—this was said to be the feeling in authoritative circles—to come to terms in the diplomatic field both with Moscow and Tokyo. Agreement would have been reached long ago with the Russians if Tokyo had not had to be taken into consideration. There was reluctance to choose between Tokyo and Moscow. This was one of the reasons for the hesitant attitude of the Foreign Office.

In spite of the grave tension in Tientsin<sup>1</sup> at the beginning of the week, London was still convinced of the possibility of coming to terms in the diplomatic field with Japan. The pro-Axis party in Tokyo, although certainly strong, was still in the minority. Japanese Government circles in particular tended to avoid a breach with London. Hence too Britain's cautious attitude in the Tientsin conflict, although London

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 526.

was convinced that Japan could be hit very hard by economic reprisals. In London a conflict with Japan was regarded as most undesirable, and this was also the reason for the reluctance to conclude the Soviet pact. The British journalist himself thought, however, that this policy of balance between Russia and Japan was no longer possible, and he believed that very soon now a fundamental decision, which Chamberlain and Halifax would like to evade, would be taken. Opposition circles were advocating a decision in favour of Moscow and were quite prepared to risk the effects of such an attitude on Britain's position in the Far East.

In conclusion the British journalist stated that British public opinion was not perturbed, but was now, more than ever, calmly facing the possibility of a war with Germany. Press and propaganda were working systematically to restore the nation's confidence in Britain's power and ability to wage a war. On the whole, public opinion was more resolute in its attitude than the Government.<sup>2</sup>

L[IKUS]

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]."

## No. 552

2798/548113

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 278

BERLIN, June 21, 1939.

For the Ambassador personally.

With reference to today's telephone instructions<sup>1</sup> about your journey to Berlin.

The Foreign Minister requests you to remain in Paris until a fresh date for your journey to Berlin is communicated to you. This will probably be at the end of this week. He requests you however to avoid any important political conversations until this discussion.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> No record has been found. Welzeck had just returned from Berlin, from a visit undertaken for private reasons, for which he had asked permission in a personal letter to Weizsäcker dated June 6 (not printed, 8363/E590602-04). In a memorandum of June 7, St.S. No. 477 (not printed, 8363/E590606), Weizsäcker recorded that he had telephoned Welzeck giving the permission. See also document No. 592.

<sup>2</sup> On the same day, Weizsäcker had drafted the following telegram to Welzeck (2196/473660) which was, however, not sent: "As arranged, I have submitted the question to the Foreign Minister as to whether your version of the language to be held on the Polish question corresponds to his views. The Foreign Minister is of the opinion that it would be politically unwise to name dates for the settlement of our differences with Poland and possibly to state that a solution, for better or for worse, will occur before the end of 1939. I have reported to the Foreign Minister that you are basing yourself on instructions you gathered from a talk with the Foreign Minister at the beginning of last May. The Foreign Minister, for his part, does not in the least recollect such a phrase and asks for an early report from you about the principles and details of the language you held to the French. Meanwhile, the Foreign Minister asks you to refrain completely from discussing the subject in Paris and to keep out of Bonnet's way."

## No. 553

174/135075

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

No. 198

BERLIN, June 21, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Solely for the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 257.<sup>2</sup>

The Foreign Minister wishes you to be informed that he thoroughly approves the continuation of your individual talks on the lines of the information communicated to you. He requests you, however, not now to press the question as to when the treaty is to be concluded.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.<sup>2</sup> Document No. 548.

## No. 554

2276/479773-84

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 394

BRATISLAVA, June 21, 1939.

S.M.

Received June 22.

Pol. IV 1409 g.

I beg to submit herewith an *Aide-Mémoire* just transmitted by the Slovak Foreign Ministry. The document records the arguments advanced by the Slovak Government at the Conference with the German military delegation on June 19.<sup>1</sup> According to Minister President Tiso, this memorandum was to form the subject of an interview which he intended to request with the Führer and Chancellor.

This request was not repeated when the memorandum was transmitted but that does not exclude the possibility that it may be put forward in another way.

V. DRUFFEL

<sup>1</sup> According to the record of this Conference, made by the German Military Commission in Slovakia (not printed, 8353/E590492-97), it was held to discuss a Slovak *Note Verbale* of June 12 (not printed, 8353/E590475-78) which contained the instructions given to the Slovak military commission about a number of Slovak points on the treaty on the Zone of Protection then under negotiation. In the course of the Conference, Tiso expressed the wish to draw up a memorandum (the document here printed) and to discuss it personally with Hitler. He was promised that this paper would be sent to Berlin (see also document No. 559). An unsigned, undated memorandum (not printed, 8353/E590498) states that an air courier who arrived in Bratislava on June 20 had informed the German delegation there that the Slovak *Note Verbale* had been submitted to Hitler, who had refused to go into the various points and from whom further instructions were expected shortly.

[Enclosure]

No. 4788

SLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTRY.  
BRATISLAVA, June 19, 1939.

## AIDE-MÉMOIRE

In view of the negotiations on June 19, the Slovak Government consider it necessary to refer again to the fundamental attitude they have adopted in respect of several questions which have arisen in the course of the negotiations.

1. With regard to the zone, the Slovak Government adhere to their original standpoint and are convinced that the Slovak Army must have free access to the zone itself and that, as this concerns the administration of the Slovak State, the Slovak Government are entitled also to maintain garrisons in these [*sic*] zones and to have any necessary works carried out there. The Slovak Government base this standpoint on the fact that is clear from both the letter and the spirit of the Treaty of Protection<sup>2</sup> that the German Wehrmacht is to cooperate with the Slovak Army. It is clear that the zone is not an area placed under an occupying authority but a zone within the structure of the Slovak State, in which certain works of fortification are to be carried out so as to enable the German Wehrmacht, in the event of war, to take up such positions as are most advantageous to it.

2. It must be mentioned in this connection that during the negotiations on the night of March 15-18 [*sic*]<sup>3</sup> in which the Führer of the German Reich, the German Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop, and General von Keitel personally took part, stress was laid only on the right to build fortifications and to maintain the necessary forces in these fortifications. From this it is clear that there was no question of placing any limit on the Slovak garrisons within the zonal area and that such is a claim was never made; on the contrary, such a claim was not even intended to be made. It appears, on the contrary, that the competent German military circles are trying to deduce from the words "military sovereign rights", rights which were far from the intentions of the contracting parties. Rather, it must be pointed out that both Slovak and German military units are to cooperate in the zonal area.

3. In construing the term "military sovereign rights", the Slovak Government point out that in the negotiations on the afternoon of March 18,<sup>4</sup> in the Hotel Imperial, between the Slovak Ministers Dr. Tuka, Dr. Ďurčanský, and State Secretary Dr. Zvrškovec on the one

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 40.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is presumably to conversations in Vienna on the night of Mar. 17-18 (see below, para. 4). No record has been found of these conversations.

<sup>4</sup> No record has been found but the reference appears to be to the meeting in Vienna when the Treaty of Protection (document No. 40) was signed by the Slovak representatives Tuka and Ďurčanský.



side, and State Secretary Keppler of the Foreign Ministry and the Legal Adviser to the Foreign Minister, Gaus, on the other, it was explicitly emphasized by the German side, with reference to Article 2 of the Treaty of Protection, that "sovereign rights" applied only to jurisdiction and sovereignty over the members of the German Wehrmacht present in the fortified zone, or working on the fortifications, and to Reich nationals engaged on work on the fortifications, in so far as the administration of criminal or civil justice—in connection with their employment—was involved. No explanatory note was added to the Treaty of Protection, for the simple reason that the Slovak Ministers were assured that, in this respect, no doubts could possibly arise.

It is self-evident that the Treaty having once been made, later interpretations of the term "sovereign rights" must be restricted, i.e., this term must be interpreted in a narrow sense. Anything that is not set out in this part of the Treaty cannot be read into it as being the intention of the contracting Parties. The reservation [*sic*], to define the term "sovereign rights" was necessary for reasons of international law, because, if this definition were not included in the Treaty, all persons mentioned in the Treaty of Protection, i.e., members of the German Wehrmacht and other Reich nationals engaged on the construction of the fortifications, would, as they were in the territory of a foreign sovereign State, *eo ipso*, be subject to the jurisdiction of that State and the sovereignty of Slovakia in general.

It is therefore a question of a privilege of the German Reich and its nationals, and, as such, it must be interpreted narrowly in accordance with the general provisions. The interpretation of the term "sovereign rights" by the representatives of the German Legal Commission is, however, very wide, as they interpret this term "sovereign rights" as applying to the territory in general and not only to Reich nationals, which means that this right would also apply to all those persons who are temporarily or permanently resident in the zone and who are Slovak nationals, which would lead to Slovak nationals being subject to German jurisdiction.

4. In the area of the zone there are quite a number of military installations which formerly belonged to the Czecho-Slovak military authorities and which are now the property of the Slovak State. The German military authorities are now taking over the administration of these installations without regard to the fact that nothing of the kind is provided for in the Treaty, nor has it been mentioned in the preceding negotiations. The German Wehrmacht are taking over these installations without the consent of the competent Slovak authorities, without advance notification, contrary to the will of the Slovak authorities, and in most cases by force, although these installations are Slovak property, being situated on Slovak territory. Among these installations is the artillery range at Malacky, which is the only one of

its type. The Slovak State, however, requires this artillery range which must primarily serve the Slovak Army. But as this artillery range is also being used by the forces stationed in the zone, the German Wehrmacht must come to an agreement with the competent Slovak military authorities about the rent for use of the artillery range. The same principle also applies to other installations which the German Army may need temporarily or permanently. In these cases too, agreement on the rent would have to be reached.

At the negotiations on this Treaty which took place during the night of March 17-18, it was expressly emphasized that in the whole zone only a few units of a hundred men each (Companies) were to be maintained, whose task it would be to keep the fortifications in good condition. There was no question of garrisons at all. The present position, however, actually is that there are many garrisons in Slovakia manned by the German Army, which is contrary to the spirit as well as the letter of the Treaty. The manning of the garrisons is, however, unnecessary if for no other reason than that Moravia on the one hand forms a good hinterland in which garrisons can be set up in large numbers and on the other hand because no fortifications have so far been constructed, and are not even yet being built. In these circumstances it is hardly conceivable that garrisons should be maintained also entirely outside the zone, for example in Žilina, Trenčín or Nové Město nad Váhom.

Even for psychological reasons it would therefore be expedient to withdraw the German troops and that the sooner the better, since hostile propaganda is well versed in exploiting this.

5. As military units only were mentioned at the negotiations, it must be pointed out that for instance field police are stationed in Považska-Bystrica, and that uniformed SS formations have made excursions to Bratislava, which have given the impression of military occupation and have thus provided hostile propaganda, lying in wait for the opportunity, with ample material for its false reports.<sup>5</sup> Thus it happened that on the 17th instant several foreign radio stations reported the occupation of Bratislava and Slovakia. This report was specially enhanced by the fact that on the evening of the 16th instant, the above-mentioned SS excursion in some trucks to Bratislava took place.

It is clear that only military units are entitled to be in the zone but not police and gendarmerie.

6. With regard to military material, Slovakia adheres to her original standpoint,<sup>6</sup> namely, that anything situated in the territory of Slovakia is the property of the Slovak State, no distinction being made between civil and military property, and that both the military installations and the military equipment are the property of the Slovak State. The

<sup>5</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Nos. 61 and 100, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 251.

<sup>6</sup> Included as point V in the *Note Verbale* of June 12 (see footnote 1).

German Wehrmacht, however, has so conducted itself in Slovakia as to start removing equipment without any compensation, in some cases even resulting in the destruction of property, thus naturally causing great agitation among the public. They could not understand such conduct by the German Wehrmacht.

We only quote a few examples here: German troops occupied the garrisons at Bösing-Modern, Malacky, Plav. Podhradie, Hlboké, Turecký, Vrch, Senica, Nemcova, Nové Město nad Váhom, Trenčín, Istebník, Skalka and Žilina. From all these garrisons the German Wehrmacht removed the available war material, i.e., rifles and other equipment. This material was removed from the garrisons following an order in the form of an ultimatum, and neither the representations of the local Slovak commander nor the protests of the Ministry of Defence prevented further removal. Thus it happened that no Slovak military official was present when the material was being removed so that it was impossible to check the material removed. The manner in which this action was carried out by the German troops often transgressed the bounds of an amicable atmosphere. The German troops, on entering the installations, disarmed the Slovak guard, indeed often whole Slovak units, took possession of the keys of the stores, broke the locks and removed everything movable without any check being exercised. The German troops not only occupied military installations and garrisons but also munitions dumps (Kubra) and factories in which every kind of war material was manufactured. Thus Dubnica, Pov.-Bystrica, the Michera plant in Stara Tura, the Tauš firm's factory at Myjava, the munitions factory in Žilina were occupied and war material there removed.

In these proceedings not even papers were spared, so that a great many documents were lost. Things improved to a certain extent only after the arrival of Major Becker.

The German Army has drawn up a record of the stocks and installations of the airfield at Nový Dvůr that they took over.

At the Žilina airfield the German Army took over Squadron 15 of the Air Force complete with equipment and petrol. Nor was this done by desirable ways and means either. When the Commandant of the airfield arrived there in the morning, the German Wehrmacht had set up on the airfield 24 machine guns with their crews, simply because the Commandant had refused to hand over the material the previous day. He protested in vain against this procedure. While the Commandant was telephoning to the Ministry of Defence in Bratislava for instructions on how to act, the German soldiers arbitrarily broke open the locks of all the cases containing articles of equipment and in this arbitrary way took over aeroplanes and material. When the Commandant protested to Captain Abel of the Engineers he was told that the German Wehrmacht had orders to remove all the equipment of the Squadron,

regardless of protest, so that here too any check on the material removed was prevented.

The situation today is that the presence of German troops in Slovakia is explained by the Reich authorities in Bratislava as being intended to serve as a means of pressure for the surrender of war material situated on Slovak territory. The Slovak Government take the view that their own army should first be equipped with the war material available in Slovakia and then stocks should be built up for mobilization in case of war. In many respects there is an appreciable shortage of war material even for normal times, to say nothing of mobilization. In respect of other material there is a varying degree of shortage but there cannot be any question of a surplus. If there were really a surplus in Slovak territory, Slovakia would be gladly prepared to offer that surplus for sale to the German Reich. The Slovak Army is at present being reorganized and it would not be advisable to undertake an assessment of available material at a time when the more important question of organization predominates. It must be emphasized that the headquarters of the Czecho-Slovak Army was in Prague, so that—with regard to the material—the Reich German military authorities have more data available than the Slovak Government. The present position of Slovakia in respect of war material is practically the same as in March of this year, when, although war material was available in the occupied zone, it was not handed over to the Slovak Army, so that the latter could not even use anti-aircraft guns against the bombing of Zipser Neudorf<sup>7</sup> for instance, and it was some considerable time before an improvement in this state of affairs could be brought about. Nowhere does it emerge from the sense of the Treaty of March 23 last that, in the event of an enemy invasion, it should be rendered impossible or difficult for Slovakia to defend her frontiers and existence. It is only natural that the Slovak Government should demand compensation for the material removed without their consent; such compensation to take the form above all of war material which Slovakia lacks, e.g. bombers etc., while the remainder should be credited to the account of Slovakia from which the Slovak Government could carry out their capital investment programme. Admittedly it is argued that more material was stored in Slovakia than corresponded to the number of inhabitants and/or to the tax yield from the taxpayers. Here, however, it must be pointed out that, as a matter of pure fact, the war material was purchased out of the revenue of several budgetary years, nor must it be forgotten that for many years Slovakia was deliberately subjected to detrimental treatment over this budget. If therefore it is to be expected that Slovakia should be deprived of that portion of war material wrongly regarded as a surplus, then Slovakia should also be

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<sup>7</sup> See document No. 111.

compensated for the deficit which arose because Slovakia was for years detrimentally treated over other budget items. Incidentally it may be said that, in February last, the Beran<sup>8</sup> Government sanctioned the use of the money acquired by the sale of war material to cover the capital expended on the construction of the Diviaky-Banska Bystrica railway line—and it may also be said in passing that 20 million Czech crowns, voted in the 1938 budget for building the University of Bratislava, were in fact used for rearmament, and many other examples could be quoted.

7. As regards the mustard gas, Germany has expressed the wish for its destruction.<sup>9</sup> It has perhaps been forgotten that Slovakia is an independent State and that this is a means of defence which Slovakia must have at her disposal in case she has to defend herself against attacks from Hungary. It would be incomprehensible to public opinion if the Government had to dispense with even their last means of defence.

Nor must it be forgotten either that, in consequence of the removal of important items of equipment, much mistrust and misunderstanding has arisen in the Slovak Army, and that this is not calculated to consolidate good relations between the German and Slovak armed forces, because the Slovak soldiers see an obvious diminution of the fighting strength of the Slovak Army, and they therefore more easily fall a prey to enemy whispering propaganda, which describes the removal of Slovak war material by German troops as exploitation. These elements create an atmosphere which, even if only in isolated, exceptional cases, leads to the demoralization of some Slovak soldiers. In this connection it must be pointed out that, in removing war material, the German authorities proceed in such a way as not to obtain the required permission of the competent Slovak authorities and that thus their actions often conflict with those of the Slovak authorities. It is only natural that such actions, too, should not promote good relations between the two armies. In certain places, for example at Nemcova—as was later confirmed in the presence of Lieutenant-General Barckhausen<sup>10</sup>—when the war material was removed it was so badly damaged and even destroyed that the greatest bitterness was bound to be caused amongst those present, as this proceeding was carried out by force, without informing, or cooperating with, the Slovak authorities. These proceedings were conducted as though Slovakia were an enemy country and not a State whose political and territorial independence had been guaranteed by the Führer and Chancellor. The disillusion which such proceedings were bound to cause among the people [*sic*] when it is

<sup>8</sup> Rudolf Beran, Czecho-Slovak Minister President, December 1938–March 1939.

<sup>9</sup> The question of stocks of war gas and its manufacture had been discussed at a conference on May 25, as recorded by Captain Rittler, a member of the German delegation (not printed, 8353/E590479–84).

<sup>10</sup> Lt. General Franz Barckhausen, of the German Military Commission in Slovakia.

realized that, after the conclusion of the German-Slovak Treaty, incidents have occurred similar to those which took place during the invasion of Slovak territory by Hungarian troops.<sup>7</sup>

8. Military units and other groups, without notification, either under leadership or on their own, crossed the present furthest boundaries of the zone, and in a manner often politically undesirable. For example, German soldiers receive considerably higher pay than Slovak soldiers and, as a result, can frequent places of entertainment outside the zone which, owing to the prevailing prices, are beyond the means of the Slovak soldier. This gives rise to a feeling of social inequality, often expressed in the form of envy. It would be advisable to put an end to this state of affairs, for should such excursions continue, they might, for the reasons stated above, lead to tension between German and Slovak soldiers which would be otherwise quite unjustified and would be undesirable for either side.

9. In the month of April, the Slovak Government, in one instance, returned 2 million crowns which had been brought into Slovakia from the Protectorate in the form of 50 Czech crown banknotes, contrary to the prevailing currency regulations. The Slovak Government did this on condition that the money was sent back to the Protectorate and that such cases did not recur. In view of the generally known correct behaviour of the German people and of the good relations between the two States, the Slovak Government have not tightened their control measures. But now the Slovak Government have learned that the German administration in Senica is bringing 50 Czech crown banknotes into Slovakia from the Protectorate to pay its employees. These bank notes are being brought across the frontier by German soldiers in a private car. Thus, in the last week, 22,000 Czech crowns were brought in, in a small package stuck down with a strip of paper bearing the imprint of the Czech National Bank. It is also noteworthy that German soldiers, gendarmes and police usually pay with 50 Czech crown notes. The Slovak Government finally beg to point out that such procedure actually means an increase in the Slovak national debt.

10. If the German military authorities are instructed to settle these questions with the Slovak Ministers in the spirit in which the Treaty of Protection was concluded, nothing will stand in the way of treating the zone as proposed in today's discussion. It is therefore necessary to stress, with respect to the administrative and economic uncertainty caused by the attitude of the German Wehrmacht, that the Slovak State's main interest is to settle this matter quickly. It would therefore be desirable for the competent authorities to be so instructed.

## No. 555

8273/E588195

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division I*

BERLIN, June 21, 1939.

e.o. Pol. I M 2537 g.

## GERMAN MILITARY DEMONSTRATIONS IN DANZIG

1) At the request of the National Socialist Navy League [*NS. Marinebund*] a contingent of the fifth Naval Division,<sup>1</sup> composed of four officers, eleven non-commissioned officers and seventy men, including the band composed of forty-seven men, will be going to Danzig to take part in the dedication of a memorial tablet for Vice Admiral von Jachmann on May 25. The Polish Government have not been informed of this. According to previous custom, a request for approval was not necessary.

2) For the twenty-fifth commemoration of the dead of the cruiser *Magdeburg* at the cemetery in Danzig the cruiser *Königsberg* will visit Danzig from August 25-28, 1939. The Danzig Senate has been informed.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, in accordance with the position under the Treaty and previous custom, the German Embassy in Warsaw was also instructed to take the requisite steps (formal announcement to the Polish Government).<sup>3</sup> A report from the Embassy has not yet been received.

3) The Führer told Herr Greiser in February<sup>4</sup> that Danzig would be visited during this year by a German naval squadron. He had thought of possibly three larger units, a destroyer division, a submarine flotilla and escorting vessels. This plan is not affected by the visits referred to under (2). Rather, the Führer has reserved special instructions with reference to (3).<sup>5</sup>

Submitted through the Under State Secretary to the State Secretary in accordance with instructions.

Pol. V has received a copy.

VON KAMPHOEVENER

<sup>1</sup> The Fifth Naval Coastal Defence Division [*Marineartillerieabteilung*] stationed at Pillau.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 378.

<sup>3</sup> For the prescribed diplomatic procedure in connection with visits of foreign war-ships to Danzig, see document No. 553, footnote 5.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 361, footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Herr Heyden. What is the position on 3)? W[eizsäcker] 21 [June]".

## No. 556

1625/388923-24

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 1 [sic] of June 21

ANKARA, June 22, 1939—12:15 a.m.

Received June 22—7:25 a.m.

Pol. II 2213.

The arguments which your telegram No. 142 of June 16<sup>1</sup> instructs me to use, I have already advanced very emphatically in my last conversation with Numan. He justified his Government's attitude by saying that an identical text for both declarations had already been settled on May 12, and that the omission of paragraph 6 would only give rise to assertions that the Franco-Turkish Declaration<sup>2</sup> contained a substantial restriction as compared with the Anglo-Turkish Declaration. Article 6 merely laid down that the Balkans were a Turkish sphere of interest and that conflicts might arise there, which might not be covered by the inter-Balkan obligations. He repeated that the President of the Chamber would explain unmistakably in his accompanying speech that the Balkan Pact was an instrument *sui generis*, that Turkey did not want any collective security at all; she was exclusively concerned with her own sphere of interest. In a detailed conversation on the extent of the Turkish commitments, Numan spoke very frankly about all conceivable cases of conflict. Turkey would take part in any conflict which involved the Mediterranean, even the Western Mediterranean, because it was in her interest that neither Italy nor Britain should gain hegemony there. This, in outline, was also Turkey's attitude to an Italian attack on Greece. Turkey's obligations respecting any conflict in Northern Europe were quite different. An attack on Yugoslavia or Rumania was of no interest as long as Bulgaria did not participate, thus bringing obligations under the Balkan Pact into play. However, here the reservation must be made that if, in the event of an attack on Rumania, the aggressor occupied the Black Sea coast, then Turkey's sphere of interest would be violated. Turkey herself had the greatest interest in the Balkans remaining completely neutral in any possible conflict in Northern Europe. Hence, too, she did not wish the Balkan Pact to be used by the Western Powers in any way as an instrument for encirclement and for a possible automatic entry into the war. In order to prove his complete frankness to me on these intended reservations he would inform me in confidence as soon

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 533.<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 777.



as a final definition of Turkish commitments over Rumania was discussed between the British Ambassador and himself. Numan emphasized afresh that Turkey's participation in a war would, in any event, be of a purely defensive nature. In accordance with these statements, he could assure me that reports from Rome on June 16, that Gafencu had discussed the military alliance with Turkey here, were quite unfounded. I pointed out to Numan that all these artificial constructions did not stand the test of reality and that since Britain appeared to be handing over the leadership in European politics to Russia, this web of collective obligations, for all that Turkey might have the best intentions, would be bound to drive the Government irretrievably into any conflict. To this he could only reply that Britain had the greatest interest in a peaceful solution of outstanding problems and would definitely approach the Axis Powers with positive proposals in the autumn. Finally he said he had lifted the restrictions on Turkish exports of chrome<sup>3</sup> and had also stopped the dismissal of specialists;<sup>4</sup> he hoped that our relations would remain unchanged. The date of the Franco-Turkish declaration is not fixed, because of new difficulties in the Hatay negotiations. On Monday he would once more speak to all ... (group mutilated) in order to stop press complaints. A despatch on this follows.

The Havas report on the revival of the Saadabad Pact<sup>5</sup> and Egypt's accession to it is untrue. The Egyptian Foreign Minister's tour<sup>6</sup> has doubtless been undertaken at Britain's request, but Turkey does not want this extension of the Pact because it would be greatly weakened by the inclusion of divergent Arab interests. In this connection the report of the reception of Ibn Saud's representative by the Führer<sup>7</sup> and also our marked interest in Arab questions has made a deep impression here.

PAPEN

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 472 and 475.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 512, footnote 2.

<sup>5</sup> The Non-Aggression Treaty between Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq and Turkey, signed at the Palace of Saadabad in Teheran on July 8, 1937. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 141, pp. 712-714.

<sup>6</sup> The Egyptian Foreign Minister, Abdel Fattah Yehia Pasha, arrived in Turkey on an official visit on June 17, remaining there until June 23, when he left for a tour of visits to Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade and Athens.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 541.

## No. 557

158/131128-40

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 1177

WASHINGTON D.C., June 22, 1939.

Received July 10.

Pol. VIII 1221.

Subject: The policy of the Roosevelt Government in the Far East.

America's transition from a dynamic pioneer country bursting with energy to a sceptical conservative Great Power is probably nowhere more apparent than in the pronounced changes in America's policy in the Far East. The imperialism of the turn of the century, with its urge for expansion, and the dreams of American capitalism of opening up an economic empire in the broad expanses of China, have now given way to a policy of hesitation, of cautious wait-and-see, of indecision, of labouring to maintain existing interests and of relinquishing one or other position once occupied with such high hopes.

The decisive turning point lies in the collapse of the efforts made by Henry L. Stimson,<sup>1</sup> Hoover's Secretary of State, to defend the *status quo* in the Far East against the advance of Japan, by means of large-scale collective action by America and the European Great Powers. Up till then the United States, in common with the other parties to the Nine Power Pact,<sup>2</sup> had felt herself strong enough not only to protect her position in the Far East against any change, but also to extend and consolidate it. When, however, the League of Nations' action against Japan, supported by Stimson with all his might, broke down, and when all attempts, even outside the League of Nations, at collective action by the signatories of the Nine Power Pact had failed owing to Britain's unwillingness, America was suddenly faced with the grave question of whether she ought alone to run the risk of hostilities with the major military Power in the Far East. Neither the American Government nor, above all, American opinion were prepared to do this. Not even the strongest sympathy for the Chinese, the most exaggerated ideas of present and potential economic interests, or the traditional moralizing attitude towards international events, as had found expression in the anti-Japanese feeling after the occupation of Manchuria, could create any illusion about the insoluble problems and dangers of a military adventure extending over seven or eight thousand miles. Nor had any preparations been made for it. It was precisely the Washington

<sup>1</sup> United States Secretary of State 1929-1933.

<sup>2</sup> The Treaty between the British Empire, the United States of America, Belgium, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Portugal, regarding the Principles and Policies to be followed in Matters concerning China, signed at Washington, Feb. 6, 1922. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 119, pp. 562-567.

Naval Agreement of 1922,<sup>3</sup> with its limitations of armaments and the obligations entered into under it of not developing the islands of the mid-Pacific into naval bases, which rendered a large-scale and effective American expedition impossible. Apart from this, the world economic crisis, and the great economic and social problems following in its wake, had so weakened the country that, from this point of view alone, it did not feel in a position to embark on such an undertaking.

Roosevelt and Hull have drawn the necessary conclusions from these facts. Yet they too have not completely abandoned the Stimson course of collective security. Thus, in questions of the Far Eastern conflict, the American Government have continued to cooperate with the League of Nations. Lord Lytton's report<sup>4</sup> on the Japanese action in Manchuria and the consequent condemnation of Japan were accepted and Hugh Wilson, then Minister in Berne, was sent as American representative without voting powers to the meetings of the special Advisory Committee set up for the Far Eastern conflict. This Committee's recommendations against the recognition of Manchukuo were also approved by the American Government.<sup>5</sup> Thus Roosevelt upheld the principle as laid down by Stimson in his Note of January 4, 1932<sup>6</sup> of "non-recognition" of unilateral changes or treaty agreements which might be calculated to impair American rights in China, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China, and the policy of the "open door". For the rest Roosevelt avoided any American initiative or intervention in favour of one side or the other. Rather was he at pains to normalize, by means of a generally conciliatory attitude, the very strained relations caused by Stimson's efforts. This attitude was not even changed when in April, 1934, a spokesman of the Japanese Foreign Ministry declared Japan to be China's protecting Power, and warned foreign Powers against economic or political measures in China directed against Japan.<sup>7</sup> Secretary of State Hull answered this Japanese declaration with a calmly worded Note on April 29, 1934,<sup>8</sup> in which he drew attention to existing treaties, the possibility of their being modified, though not by the unilateral act of one of the signatories but by means of agreement ("processes prescribed or recognized or

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<sup>3</sup> The Treaty between the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and the United States of America for the Limitation of Naval Armament, signed at Washington, Feb. 6, 1922. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 117, pp. 453-471.

<sup>4</sup> The Report by the Commission of Enquiry on the Appeal by the Chinese Government was adopted by the League Assembly on Feb. 24, 1933; in a letter of Feb. 25 to the Secretary General of the League, Stimson stated that the United States were in substantial accord with the findings and conclusions of the League. See *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* (Government Printing Office, Washington, in progress) (hereinafter cited as *Foreign Relations of the U.S.*), *Japan: 1931-1941*, vol. 1, pp. 115-116.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 118-123.

<sup>6</sup> See *ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 76.

<sup>7</sup> See *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 223-225.

<sup>8</sup> See *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 231-232.

agreed upon by the parties to them")<sup>9</sup>, and, in conclusion, to the good neighbour policy for which Roosevelt was striving, and to the practical realization of which the American Government would devote themselves. The fact that the Note was much calmer in tone than the British Government's statement<sup>10</sup> and was handed in at Tokyo after the latter, showed clearly that the American Government were departing from Stimson's policy, if not in principle, at least in method.

Though Roosevelt was obviously endeavouring to limit American policy in the Far East to the preservation of existing American interests, and to avoid any American initiative which might have irritated Japan, he was nevertheless determined to change the balance of power in the Pacific, as far as possible to the advantage of the United States. In this respect the recognition of Soviet Russia on November 16, 1933, and the unyielding American attitude on the question of naval ratios are important. The Japanese demands for parity between the naval strength of Japan and that of Britain and America, which have continued to grow louder since 1933, have never been admitted by Roosevelt. When Japan freed herself from all treaty obligations by denouncing the Washington Naval Agreement of 1922<sup>11</sup> and by refusing to ratify the London Treaty of 1930<sup>12</sup> and raised her naval construction programme to a record level, Roosevelt, by means of an American naval construction programme which far exceeded all previous programmes drawn up in peacetime, gave expression to the American Government's determination to maintain *de facto* the parity laid down in the Washington Treaty (5:5:3), because, after the Washington Treaty system of 1922 had collapsed and all attempts to halt Japanese expansion by the methods of collective security had failed, a strong American fleet seemed imperative, if only to protect the Philippines and other positions in the Pacific.

Efforts to make the Philippines independent have, after all, only a loose connection with American policy in the Far East. With Japan's rise to the position of predominant Power in the Far East, the importance of the Philippines underwent a change. The American spring-board for the economic opening-up of China had become an Achilles' heel, the defence of which set almost insoluble problems to the American

<sup>9</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>10</sup> Of Apr. 25, 1934. See Sir John Simon's statements in the House of Commons on Apr. 30 and May 18, 1934, in *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 289, cols. 13-14 and cols. 2098-2116.

<sup>11</sup> In a note dated Dec. 29, 1934, the Japanese Government informed the United States Government of their intention to terminate the Washington Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armament with effect from Dec. 31, 1936. See *Foreign Relations of the U.S., Japan*, vol. 1, p. 274.

<sup>12</sup> The International Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armament was signed in London on Apr. 22, 1930, and ratifications, including Japan's, deposited on Oct. 27, 1930, (see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 132, pp. 603-619). The reference is presumably to the Japanese withdrawal from the London Naval Conference, held under the provisions of the London Treaty, in 1935-1936. See *Foreign Relations of the U.S., Japan*, vol. 1, pp. 277-297.

land and sea forces. In view of this, there have recently been influential forces at work which, for fear of entanglements in the Pacific, would like to bring about the relinquishment of the islands as quickly as possible. The motives which prompted the Act of Independence of March 24, 1934,<sup>13</sup> whereby the Philippines are to become fully independent in 1946, were, however, far more of an economic than of a political nature. The expectations of the imperialists had not been fulfilled. The Philippines had not developed into a centre of American economic power and Manila had not become an American Singapore or Hong Kong. On the contrary the sale of the agricultural products of the Philippines (sugar, coconut oil, etc.) had, especially in the post-war period, developed to the serious disadvantage of home production on the American market. It was the American farmer and American industry who wanted to be rid of an irksome competitor. It would be premature to conclude today from the Act of March 24, 1934, that the United States have finally abandoned their position in the Philippines. In spite of all the autonomy granted to the Philippines, American rule will continue until 1946 and, in view of the uncertain situation in the Pacific, it cannot yet be foreseen whether the United States will then be prepared to quit the islands without corresponding guarantees from Japan.

The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in July, 1937, was a heavy blow to Roosevelt's Far Eastern policy. Yet, even so, Roosevelt did not feel obliged to make any fundamental change in his attitude of cautious reserve, aimed at bringing about a *détente*, however much it appeared, on occasion, that the President wanted to embark on a new and more aggressive course. Characteristic of the Government's attitude was Hull's statement on July 16, 1937,<sup>14</sup> in which he proclaimed, in his own peculiarly dogmatic way, the general principles of American politics, such as love of peace, sanctity of treaties, the solution of international problems by means of agreement, the equality of economic opportunity for all countries, etc., without saying a word about the Sino-Japanese war, the integrity of China, or the sacred principle of the "open door".

Roosevelt's well-known Chicago speech of October 5 that same year,<sup>15</sup> in which he called on the "peace-loving nations" to take common action against the treaty-violating States, and demanded the latter's quarantine, gave rise to the impression that the American Government would now follow a policy of economic or even military pressure on Japan. However pleased Britain and the other signatory

<sup>13</sup> The Act of the Congress of the United States of America to provide for the Independence of the Philippine Islands and for the adoption of a Constitution and Form of Government, approved Mar. 24, 1934. For the text see 48 Stat. 456.

<sup>14</sup> See *Peace and War*, No. 86.

<sup>15</sup> See *ibid.*, No. 93.

States of the Nine Power Pact might have been at this supposed return of American policy to Stimson's initiative, yet the sessions of the Brussels Conference, which met from November 3 to 24, 1937,<sup>16</sup> showed that the American President was not in earnest over a fundamental change in his attitude towards relations with Japan. The American delegates' instructions were narrowly drawn and were limited to trying to find a solution of the Sino-Japanese dispute by means of negotiation. In view of the fact that Japan refused to take part in the Conference, the other participants had no choice but to disperse after reaffirming their adherence to the provisions of the Nine Power Pact.

The *Panay* incident of December, 1937,<sup>17</sup> too, while it strongly roused American public opinion, and caused the Government to make sharp protests and heavy demands for compensation, did not change the Government's cautious and almost hesitant attitude towards Japan.

It was only developments in Europe during 1938, and anxiety lest the growing achievements of the totalitarian States in Europe might make Japan more ready to act, that caused Roosevelt, who was adopting more and more the role of a champion of the "peace-loving" democracies, to take measures in the Far East as well, which, however, were the result less of thorough planning than of emotional impulse. The credits amounting to 25 million dollars granted to China, and also the Bill introduced into Congress for the development of the Pacific island of Guam as a naval and air base, are typical of this. How little prepared Congress and public opinion were to follow the President along this line is shown not only by the voting in the Senate and the House of Representatives, where the Guam project was rejected by large majorities, but also by the unanimously hostile criticism of the American press, which regarded the projected naval base merely as an unnecessary source of irritation to Japan. Nor could an obviously Government-inspired article by Lippmann,<sup>18</sup> according to which the Guam project was to serve as a means of exerting pressure or as a bargaining counter in the event of negotiations with Japan, change the situation.

In spite of these measures, of which the one, given the modest credits, proved no more than a gesture to strengthen China's power of resistance, while the other did not get beyond the planning stage, the course of American policy remained unchanged, being to try and induce the Japanese Government to accord *de jure* recognition to Ameri-

<sup>16</sup> The Conference of the Parties to the Nine Power Pact (see footnote 2), met without Japan, to discuss the situation in the Far East. See Department of State Conference Series 37 (publication 1232): *The Conference of Brussels, November 3-24, 1937* (Government Printing Office, Washington, 1938).

<sup>17</sup> On Dec. 12, 1937, the U.S. gunboat *Panay*, proceeding up-river from Nanking, was sunk by bombs from Japanese aircraft. See *Foreign Relations of the U.S., Japan*, vol. 1, pp. 517-563.

<sup>18</sup> In the *New York Herald Tribune* of Jan. 19, 1939.

can treaty rights in Chinese territories occupied by Japanese troops, and thereby to make the protection of American citizens and capital investments as effective as possible. In no document is this policy more evident than in the American Note of December 31, 1938,<sup>19</sup> which deals with the Japanese demand for recognition of the "new order" in East Asia as a prerequisite for applying "the principle of equality of opportunities"<sup>20</sup> in China. There is no mention in it either of the integrity of China or of the principle of "non-recognition". It is limited rather to the demand that existing treaty rights should not be changed by unilateral action by one of the parties to the treaty, but by means of negotiation and agreement among the States concerned. Moreover it stresses the American Government's readiness to examine proposals for the solution of existing problems in so far as these are "based on justice and reason"<sup>20</sup> and to enter into negotiations on them with the representatives of the other interested Powers, including Japan and China.

This policy of reserve, which avoids any American initiative or intervention and merely insists on American rights, has also been adhered to during the new deterioration in Anglo-Japanese relations in Tientsin. Attempts by the British Government to induce the American Government to take a more active line against Japan by means of, say, an economic boycott, have met with no success. Japanese action in Tientsin,<sup>21</sup> however, has caused some anxiety in America on account of the American concessions in Amoy and Shanghai. They are determined to reply to any Japanese demands for the evacuation of these concessions with a strongly worded refusal. In the meantime it is hoped that Japan will behave differently towards the United States than towards Britain, who is, at the present moment, so heavily tied down in all continents, and that a trial of strength will thus be avoided.

Among the numerous reasons for the change-over from the activism of Stimson to the cautious but no less tenacious attitude of Hull, the development of American economic interests in the Far East is a determining factor. In this connection, the situation has changed in favour of Japan during recent years, a fact which responsible American statesmen can no longer disregard in their calculations. For in the American balance of trade Japan now occupies third place as a buyer of American goods to the tune of 239.5 million dollars, and second place as a supplier to the tune of 131.6 million dollars, while China occupies twenty-second place as a buyer of American goods at 34.7 million dollars, and thirteenth place as a supplier at 47.2 million dollars. Only this explains why, for example, the plan to develop the Guam harbour foundered in

<sup>19</sup> See *Foreign Relations of the U.S., Japan*, vol. 1, pp. 820-826.

<sup>20</sup> In the original the English phrase is set in brackets after the German.

<sup>21</sup> See document No. 526.

Congress primarily on the opposition of the representatives of the South, which is so vitally interested in the export of cotton to Japan. Besides, the expectations of large-scale profitable capital investments in China have not been fulfilled. Out of a total of American investments in the Far East amounting to 758 million dollars in 1935, Japan accounted for 387 million dollars and China for only 132 million dollars. To which must be added, according to some estimates, 40 million dollars' worth of debts on a Chinese loan dating from the World War, 35 million dollars' worth of property belonging to Americans domiciled in China, and 40 million dollars' worth of property belonging to American missionary and welfare organizations. A comparison of these figures with each other and with the thousands of millions invested by America in Europe, Canada, and Central and South America speaks for itself.

However, apart from this sober assessment of American economic interests in the Far East, which, by contrast to the days of Stimson, has become common knowledge to American public opinion, the view that present developments in the Far East can, if at all, certainly not be halted by American intervention, has been accepted, saving on the traditionally anti-Japanese West Coast, where influence on the shaping of policy is, however, very slight. Americans are not prepared to fight for the *status quo* in the Pacific as long as Japan does not badly damage American prestige or attack American possessions.

Still deeper meaning has been given to this policy for Americans, by the change in the world balance of power brought about by the rise of Germany and Italy. Perhaps nothing could be more distasteful to the Americans than a close military combination of the totalitarian States of Europe with a hostile Japan. The conclusion of the Anti-Comintern Pact seemed to provide sufficient proof that this was a distinct possibility. The public are fully aware of the consequences which might result for the United States from such a military combination in the event of a European conflict. For in certain circumstances there might arise the case of America being obliged to undertake the military protection of the Pacific interests of her friends Britain and France, who would be engaged up to the hilt in Europe. In order to prevent such a situation arising they will, as long as at all possible, adhere to a policy which will not drive the Japanese still further into the arms of the totalitarian Powers. For this reason the American Government have always rejected demands made by anti-Japanese circles for the imposition of economic sanctions. Apart from the damage to their own trade which would, of necessity, result, they are aware that such measures would drive the Japanese into war.

THOMSEN



## No. 558

8273/E583196-07

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, June 22, 1939.  
Pol. I M 2537g.<sup>1</sup> Ang. II.

According to information obtained from the competent authorities of the High Command of the Navy, the matter of the visit of a considerable naval formation to Danzig at the end of July this year (July 29-30) stands as follows:

On the Führer's instructions, the Navy, some months ago, went into the question as to how some action could be staged to show the Poles the real strength of the German Navy through a visit to Danzig. The Navy has suggested sending to Danzig at the end of July a formation consisting of two capital ships, two cruisers, two divisions of destroyers and two submarine flotillas. The strength of the formation corresponds approximately to that of the naval forces previously sent to Spain. The visit has been dated for a time when the proposed vessels would be free and not engaged in manoeuvres. The Foreign Ministry was informed in confidence of this intention at the time.<sup>2</sup> In the middle of June Grand Admiral Raeder made an oral report on the matter to the Führer and requested orders whether and when the undertaking was to be carried out. The Führer gave orders that the operation was to be carried out as suggested by the Navy, on July 29-30, in the strength proposed, unless he himself countermanded it.

In order to avoid being taken by surprise,<sup>3</sup> the Navy proposed that round about July 20 an oral report should again be made to the Führer, to enquire whether the decision, as taken, should stand.

It would appear to be intended to let the formation visit Danzig without a formal announcement to the Polish Government.<sup>4</sup>

Submitted herewith through the Acting Deputy Director of the Political Department and the Under State Secretary to the State Secretary as instructed.<sup>5</sup>

HEYDEN-RYNSCH

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 555.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 361.

<sup>3</sup> The German reads "Überrasungen"; this is presumably a typing error for "Überraschungen".

<sup>4</sup> A memorandum by Heyden-Rynsch, dated June 28 (not printed, 116/66435-36), adds to the above information that Weizsäcker had caused the Navy to be informed that as the naval visit was a political matter, the views of the Foreign Ministry should determine the report to be made to the Führer.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Oral report made to the Foreign Minister, 24/6. To the Under State Secretary [Political Department] with the request for resubmission with the memorandum to be prepared by Herr Kamphoevenner. W[eizsäcker] 24 [June]." In a memorandum of June 27 (not printed, 97/108364-66) Kamphoevenner reviewed the legal position and previous diplomatic practice in connection with visits by foreign warships to Danzig, concluding that the German Government had hitherto always complied with the legal position, making formal announcements of visits by German warships to the Polish Government with the request that they take the matter further with the Danzig Senate. The Danzig Senate had also been simultaneously notified direct by the German Consulate General.

## No. 559

610/248215-16

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, June 22, 1939.

The Slovak Minister called on me today. He said he was going to Slovakia for a few days and asked if I could tell him anything about current German-Slovak questions.

I replied that the state of the politico-military negotiations did not seem to me favourable. I had just briefly glanced through the memorandum handed to the German delegation by the Slovak Government on June 19.<sup>1</sup> It seemed to me that the impression prevailed in Bratislava that the Military Delegation there were making demands which were not those of the German Government. I must give a warning against this view and I would also ask the Minister to make it clear in Bratislava that the Delegation were making these demands in the name of the German Government.<sup>2</sup> M. Černák said that both in the military zone and outside it the German demands went beyond the Treaty of Protection.<sup>3</sup> The question was also very much a matter of psychology. An agreement must be made which would not only maintain, but arouse sympathy for Germany in large sections of the country. This, however, called for concessions by both sides. Thus, for example, it was incomprehensible that over military supplies the view should be taken that everything belonged to Germany, while for railway rolling-stock completely different principles were being applied in the negotiations, namely that the stock belonged to the party in whose territory it was on the day of handing over. I told M. Černák in reply that several of the *desiderata* expressed in the memorandum were in contradiction to the Treaty of Protection and repeated that the politico-military demands were those of the German Government and that it was my impression that they could not be departed from.

I then briefly mentioned the differences of opinion between Deputy Karmasin<sup>4</sup> and the Slovak Government on the bills introduced in connection with national community questions [*Volkstumsfragen*]. I said I did not want to discuss details of these questions, in which I was

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 554, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 129 of June 15 (not printed, 8353/E590473) Druffel, in agreement with Lt.-General Barchhausen, had recommended that, in view of the Slovak Foreign Ministry's attempts to establish inconsistencies between the demands of the German Military Delegation and the assurances given by leading German statesmen on the conclusion of the Treaty of Protection, the Slovak Government be told authoritatively that it was the Reich Government's demands which were being put forward by the Military Delegation.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 40.

<sup>4</sup> Franz Karmasin, Leader of the German national group in Slovakia.

not sufficiently versed. We hoped, however, that the [German] national group and the Slovak Government would overcome their differences of opinion by themselves. We had therefore instructed our Consul at Bratislava first of all to convey to the Slovak Government our desire that the introduction of the disputed bills should be postponed for a few days. M. Černák said that the German national group in Slovakia was the best treated in Europe, and hoped that a settlement could be reached.

WOERMANN

### No. 560

2130/465571-73

#### *Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy*

ROME, June 23, 1939.

At 11:15 a.m. State Secretary Freiherr von Weizsäcker telephoned to tell me that yesterday, with reference to our telegrams No. 260<sup>1</sup> and No. 266,<sup>2</sup> he had written me a letter<sup>3</sup> to be sent me by courier, but that he had discovered today that, as the courier went via Berne, the letter could not reach me before Monday. Therefore he wanted to tell me briefly by telephone what it was about:

The matter with which the telegrams under reference were concerned had not yet been decided in Berlin, but looked very serious for the person in question. For this reason he wished to enquire of me whether I had anything more to say about the attitude taken by authoritative people here on the question. When I interposed a question as to whether by this he meant a statement from me implying exoneration, Herr von Weizsäcker replied that this was so. He wished neither to make a suggestion nor expressly to request me to telegraph my views. But from what he said I had the impression that in Berlin,

<sup>1</sup> Not printed; see document No. 549, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2984/584517). This telegram of June 20 was signed by Plessen; it reported that Weizsäcker's instructions, received by telephone the day before, had been carried out. (A note by Plessen (not printed, 2130/465560-62) on the telephone conversation with Weizsäcker when these instructions were given, indicates that Ciano was to be asked at once to grant an exit permit for Kauffmann, so that he could be sent to Berlin where Hitler would himself decide the penalty to be imposed. Further, Hitler wished Mussolini informed through Ciano that he intended to suppress all such offences most severely.) In telegram No. 266, Plessen reported that Ciano had stated that there were no restrictions on Ortsgruppenleiter Kauffmann's leaving the country, and that he would inform Mussolini, and wished his warmest thanks conveyed to Hitler and Ribbentrop for the interest they had displayed in the matter. The case was not considered serious, but could be unpleasantly exploited by third parties. Plessen further reported that he had instructed the Consulate General at Milan to send Kauffmann at once to Berlin. See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of June 20.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (583/242126). This letter of June 22 was as indicated in the document here printed.

at least in those quarters who are interested that the penalty for what has happened should not overshoot the mark, it is considered that such an expression of views would be very desirable. I told Herr von Weizsäcker that similar ideas had already occurred to me. Only the evening of the day before yesterday I had discussed the very matter at some length with Herr von Plessen, as I felt that I, for my part, ought to do something more to prevent things from being taken more seriously in Berlin than they need be. But I had dropped the idea of intervening with a further telegram because: 1) I lacked the necessary occasion to do so and I did not wish to create the impression that I disapproved of something in telegram No. 266, which is not signed by me; 2) because I had also been relieved to hear that both Herr Bene<sup>4</sup> and Herr Ettel,<sup>5</sup> that is to say, two persons thoroughly conversant with the situation, were participating in the proceedings in Berlin. Herr von Weizsäcker stated that this was so. But, he said, the attitude of the local officials was of less importance for the decision than what was being thought here at the top. He admitted that it was difficult to find an occasion and said that he, too, thought it right that I should not want expressly to ask Count Ciano again what he felt about it. I then pointed out to him again that it was, in my view, already apparent from the two telegrams, that the very serious view which the Duce at first took of the case was evidently due to the fact that the Ortsgruppenleiter's offence against the Prefect's orders had come to his knowledge simultaneously with certain leaflets and news items about growing unrest in the South Tyrol. The way in which Count Ciano had reacted to my observations and had very rapidly obtained from the Duce the release of the Ortsgruppenleiter seemed to me to show clearly that the first reaction was attributable to the two cases having become confused. This also explains the fact, recorded in the second telegram, that Ciano no longer appeared to attach much importance to the matter. One only had to suppose how it would have been had what the Ortsgruppenleiter did, and was justly accused of, occurred in some other part of Italy and not precisely in the Alto Adige. I had no doubt that, had this been so, even the first reaction of the Duce would have been very much milder and the matter would have been handled differently from the start. I would reflect on the possibilities of a further intervention on my part by means of a telegram to Berlin; I had, however, to bear in mind that I must in no way create the impression that, unasked, I was desirous of interfering with the Führer's decision. Herr von Weizsäcker freely admitted this difficulty but on the other hand he clearly intimated how urgently desirable it would be to have some further observations from me. Finally, I said that I might perhaps

<sup>4</sup> Otto Bene, Consul General at Milan.

<sup>5</sup> Erwin Ettel, SS-Oberführer, leader of the Landesgruppe Italy in the Auslandsorganisation.

think of trying to call on Ciano in some other connection (here I was thinking of the telegram about Schwerin-Krosigk's journey<sup>6</sup>) and on such an occasion to extract informally a few more words which might be of use in Berlin in the way I also desired.<sup>7</sup>

MACKENSEN

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (8356/E590537). In this telegram, No. 304 of June 20, Mackensen was instructed to obtain an invitation for Schwerin von Krosigk, Reich Minister of Finance, to visit Italy.

<sup>7</sup> In telegram No. 311 to Rome of June 24 (not printed, 2984/584519) Woermann stated that the Italian delegation negotiating on the South Tyrol transfers had been informed that Kauffmann had been sent to a concentration camp and that Attolico had replied that the Federale of Bolzano had been removed from his post (see also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 328). In telegram No. 276 of June 24 (not printed, 2984/584520-21) Mackensen reported having an incidental conversation with Ciano on the Kauffmann case and that Ciano had expressed Mussolini's appreciation of Hitler's handling it personally in so exemplary a manner; later perhaps Mussolini might venture to suggest a pardon. Kauffmann's eventual release was announced by Bohle in telegram No. 516 to Rome of September 9 (not printed, 119/119159).

[EDITORS' NOTE: On June 23 the French and Turkish Governments signed in Paris a Declaration of mutual assistance analogous to that made by Britain and Turkey on May 12 (for the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 143, pp. 476-477). The Declaration was read to the Turkish Grand National Assembly and commented on by the Minister President on the day of signature.

On the same day was signed in Ankara an Agreement with France on the cession of the Hatay to Turkey (for the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 143, pp. 477-485).]

## No. 561

2767/535912

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 278 of June 24

BUCHAREST, June 24, 1939—11:40 a.m.

Received June 25—2:15 a.m.

Pol. II 2245.

Foreign Minister Gafencu, whom I called on yesterday afternoon after his return from Ankara,<sup>1</sup> assured me that he had definite promises from the Turks that the Balkans would not be mentioned in the final treaty with Britain. The Turkish agreements with Britain would be limited to the Eastern Mediterranean. This, he said, was necessary in order to preserve the unity of the Balkan Entente. Greece had shared his view. In this he considered his journey had been a success. He was

<sup>1</sup> The Bucharest draft (8357/E590541-43) here reads: "Athens".

more troubled by the intention of the French to make a preliminary declaration identical with the Anglo-Turkish one and wherein limited consultation to the end [*sic*]<sup>2</sup> was provided for (paragraph 6 of the declaration). Since the French had insisted on this, he had, on his return journey from the Bosphorus, once more written a private letter to the Turkish Foreign Minister and had had this transmitted by his Ambassador. In this letter he gave an urgent warning against including the Balkans in the declaration. He proposed that France and Turkey should refrain entirely from the preliminary declaration.

Gafencu said that a statement in the Senate, during the next few days, would clear up all false interpretations of the object of his visit to Ankara and Athens.

Since I have just heard of the Turco-French Declaration,<sup>3</sup> I have arranged with my Italian colleague,<sup>4</sup> to whom Gafencu made statements similar to those he made to me, for us to ask him personally today publicly to make his position plain.

FABRICIUS

<sup>2</sup> The Bucharest draft here reads: "wherein consultation concerning the Balkans was provided for".

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 777.

<sup>4</sup> Pellegrino Ghigi. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 311, 342 and 353.

## No. 562

8042/E578326-23

*The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 310

BERLIN, June 24, 1939—8:15 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. IV 3829 I.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to our telegram No. 296 of June 17.<sup>2</sup>

For information:

Those taking part in the discussion on the South Tyrol question under the chairmanship of the Reichsführer-SS on June 23 were, on the Italian side, Attolico, the Prefect of Bolzano,<sup>3</sup> the representative of the Italian Foreign Ministry, Ajeta,<sup>4</sup> and the Consul General at Innsbruck.<sup>5</sup> The result of the discussion was as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Based on Pol. IV 1463 g" (not printed, 2281/482570-79). This is the full record of the meeting of June 23. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 334.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5454/E366645). In this telegram Woermann informed the Embassy in Rome that the Reichsführer-SS had, on the Führer's orders, taken over the responsibility for the resettlement of *Reichs-* and *Volksdeutsche* from the South Tyrol and had ordered nominal rolls to be completed by June 22.

<sup>3</sup> G. Mastromattei.

<sup>4</sup> Blasco Marchese Lanza d'Ajeta, attached to the Secretariat of the Foreign Minister.

<sup>5</sup> G. Romano.

I. Resettlement of the Reich Germans and the *Volksdeutsche* from the South Tyrol is to be effected in three stages.

1) Resettlement of the "politically undesirable" Reich Germans, in particular the former Austrians, is to be carried out in the course of this year, if necessary by the most forceful measures.

2) Resettlement of the *Volksdeutsche* not attached to the land:<sup>6</sup> it is hoped to resettle some tens of thousands in the course of next year.

3) Resettlement of the *Volksdeutsche* attached to the land.

II. In order to effect the resettlement, "Official German Repatriation and Emigration Offices" are to be established in Bolzano, Merano, Bressanone, Brunico, and Vipiteno, which will be under the supervision of Consul General Bene. The Head Office, to which the four others will be subordinated, will be in Bolzano. The Auslandsorganisation will participate. Similar offices will be set up by the Italians.

III. To facilitate the naturalization of *Volksdeutsche* in Germany a special office will be set up in Munich.

IV. Italian legislative measures are in preparation for the release of returning *Volksdeutsche* from compulsory military service.

V. The Italians promised a favourable rate of exchange for the transfer of assets to Germany. Details are to be negotiated through diplomatic channels, that is, with Attolico here.

VI. The Reichsführer-SS has promised to restrict the stream of tourists from North Tyrol, in particular from Innsbruck, to the South Tyrol, the Italians having objected to it.

VII. The Italians promised favourable treatment for Reich Germans and *Volksdeutsche* in the South Tyrol in accordance with the friendly discussions held.

VIII. The Reichsführer-SS and the Italian Ambassador will remain in constant contact, with participation by the Foreign Ministry.

IX. The press will be informed after the repatriation offices have been established.

WOERMANN

<sup>6</sup> *bodengebunden*, i.e., the peasant farmers.

## No. 563

1625/368928-30

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, June 24, 1939.

e.o. Pol. II 2225.

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor von Rintelen.

The following further information has been obtained here from a

<sup>1</sup> Sent by courier on June 26 and 27 to the Missions at Ankara, London, Paris, Rome, Athens, Belgrade, Budapest, Bucharest and Sofia.

strictly confidential source about the discussions which the Rumanian Foreign Minister, Gafencu, had with the Turkish Foreign Minister, Saracoğlu, on the occasion of his recent visit to Ankara:<sup>2</sup>

In his exposition M. Gafencu advocated that the solidarity of the Balkan Entente ought to remain intact and that the Balkan Pact must not be made to serve the security system of certain Great Powers. In view of this, M. Gafencu has demanded that article 6 of the Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12 this year, which refers to the Balkans, should be omitted from the text of the proposed treaty. There should be no mention whatever in the treaty of "the security of the Balkans or the States of the Balkan Pact".

The Turkish Foreign Minister thereupon assured M. Gafencu that he would do everything possible for the Balkan Entente to retain its solidarity and would see to it that the words quoted above did not appear in the text of the final treaty.

In addition, the question of the attitude to be adopted towards Bulgaria played an important part in the discussions, and both parties to them agreed to continue to foster as friendly relations as possible with Bulgaria and also, if possible, to secure Bulgaria's accession to the Balkan Pact, but that, on the other hand, the Bulgarian Government should be given to understand that neither the Turkish nor the Rumanian Government could see any possibility of official or unofficial discussions of the subject of Bulgaria's territorial demands. This result of the Turco-Rumanian discussions has also been communicated to the Bulgarian Legation at Ankara.

In view of the source, the foregoing should not be used in any way. The first part, incidentally, agrees with and confirms the reports from the Embassy at Ankara.<sup>3</sup>

By order:  
WOERMANN

<sup>2</sup> On June 11-14.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 513.

## No. 564

1625/388958-63

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL  
A 2492

LONDON, June 24, 1939.  
Received June 28.  
Pol. II 2291.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Encirclement and constructive policy.

- 1) Growing disillusionment.
- 2) "Constructive" policy?
- 3) Chamberlain's position in domestic policy.



## I

During the last few months British foreign policy—acting under the spell of an *idée fixe* like a person running amok—has been confined to assembling, indiscriminately and without regard to British interests, as large a number of States as possible into an encirclement front against Germany. A new phase in this development has now been reached: the tempo is slowing down; calmer reflection has had a more sobering effect.

Three different sets of circumstances have contributed to this:

1) The realization that the core of the encirclement action, the alliance with Poland, is of highly questionable value, because it has again turned the German-Polish controversy into a burning European problem, in which Great Britain can now become embroiled even if none of her own interests are at stake; and because closer contact with the new ally has also revealed the latter's less attractive characteristics.

2) The hold-up in the negotiations for a pact with the Soviet Union. The various cold douches which Moscow has poured over the fiery enthusiasm of the public here have given rise to doubts whether the Soviet Government have any genuine desire whatever to conclude an alliance with the "Western democracies"; whilst, on the other hand, the Russian demand for the inclusion of the Baltic States, even against their will, in the new combination has brought the British Government face to face with the uncomfortable alternative of either giving way to the Russian demands, and by this violation of the small States tearing away the veil from the ideology of the "non-aggression front", or else of rejecting the Russian demands and thereby taking upon themselves the risk of Russia's remaining aloof from the projected association.

3) The realization that the repercussions on public opinion in Germany of Britain's feverish political activity were not in accordance with British intentions; the British Government were surprised to observe that, instead of the expected intimidation, their "non-aggression front" had been recognized by the German public as being encirclement, and had resulted in ever increasing animosity against Britain.

## II

The disillusioned, critical, and perturbed attitude taken here towards the encirclement action, has simultaneously encouraged an examination of the question whether the formation of a front against Germany is not achieving precisely the opposite effect to that desired: whether, instead of keeping Germany down and maintaining the *status quo*, it is not, on the contrary, actually sowing the seeds of new violent upheavals. The question arises whether encirclement as an end in itself is advisable.

More and more amongst the British public there is the tendency to answer this question in the negative. There is a growing conviction that building a non-aggression front must only be a foundation and prerequisite for a constructive policy towards Germany. Thus it is

thought here that in gaining new allies and increasing armaments the British Government have been given a position of strength which enables them to enter into discussion with Germany on German demands and grievances without being oppressed by a sense of inferiority—as before Munich—or of a defective coalition—as in March.

These considerations have not yet crystallized into clear ideas; there is still too much uncertainty as to the nature and extent of the German demands and also too great an aversion to making sacrifices; vague discussions on the concept of "living space", on the delimitation of spheres of interest in South East Europe, on the colonial problem and on the question of raw materials are mixed up together. There is likewise a complete lack of clarity about when and how this "constructive" policy ought to start. Only one thing can be said for certain; it has been possible to observe for some weeks now in conversations with leading British personalities that they were tending towards a discussion with Germany on burning problems, and that this is spreading to the press (Lord Rothermere in the *Daily Mail* of June 17, Sir Philip Gibbs in the *Sunday Chronicle* of June 18, Eden in the *Sunday Times* of June 18, Harold Nicolson and others in letters to the *Times*, Garvin in the *Observer* of June 25). An expression of these tendencies—although an unsuccessful one—is provided by Lord Halifax's speech in the House of Lords,<sup>1</sup> where the fact of failure to perceive the prevailing mood in Germany is perhaps mitigated if it be assumed that the speech was also partly intended to serve the purpose of gradually preparing public opinion at home for an attempt at a constructive policy towards Germany.

### III

Considerations of domestic policy also indicate that Britain will shortly have to make the development of foreign policy clear in one way or another. According to custom here it will not be possible to postpone setting a date for a general election beyond the autumn, although the present Parliament's term of office as such does not expire until the autumn of 1940. With the general election the question of an election slogan, which is to ensure for the Chamberlain Government the continuation of their present majority in the House of Commons, would become urgent. Political circles here express the assumption, which seems very likely, that the Government can only choose between two slogans "Readiness for the coming (inevitable) war" or "Safe-guarding world peace with Chamberlain". Under whatever slogan Chamberlain may embark upon the election campaign he will, in any case, be obliged to go beyond the sterile formation of a non-aggression front and attempt to investigate, by means of some positive action,

<sup>1</sup> The reference is presumably to Lord Halifax's speeches of June 8 and 12 (see *Parl. Deb., H. of L.*, vol. 113, cols. 350-364 and 428-437).

how Anglo-German relations can be developed and whether a settlement seems attainable or not.

The question suggests itself as to whether Chamberlain's position is still strong enough to enable him to make a move which would be branded by his opponents as a new relapse into the proscribed policy of "appeasement".<sup>2</sup> He is certainly bound to be charged with inconsistency and following a zig-zag policy: it will be said that he had first sought an amicable settlement with Germany and was shipwrecked with this policy; that he had then completely changed course and brought into being a coalition directed against Germany; and that he was now trying again with "appeasement".

Chamberlain's supporters reply to such considerations with an unconditional avowal of their faith in the unshaken position of the Prime Minister. They go on to point out that Chamberlain's tactics in dealing with the masses consist in letting certain sweeping currents in public opinion run their course and only intervening again and steering to the old course when the waves have spent themselves. Thus, during the Abyssinian conflict, he had allowed sanctions to be employed against Italy and then put a stop to them by his speech on "midsummer-night's madness"<sup>3</sup> after the mistaken nature of the policy of sanctions had penetrated into public consciousness. He would do the same thing now if the policy of encirclement were recognized by the British public as being dangerous and ineffective. He would then approach Germany with new proposals.

Only the course of events will show whether this line of reasoning is correct or not. At present everything in Britain is in a state of flux; the foreign policy situation is subject to daily fluctuations, due to the conflict with Japan, to the uncertain outcome of the negotiations for a pact with Russia, but primarily to developments in German-Polish relations. Accordingly the pressure of public opinion increases or diminishes in one direction or the other. Despite these fluctuations in public opinion, a surprise initiative on the part of Chamberlain is, however, within the bounds of probability and it is quite possible that the rumour current here, that he will approach Germany with new proposals directly after the completion of negotiations with the Russians, will materialize into fact, in one form or another.<sup>4</sup>

DIRKSEN<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original. In a speech at a dinner at the Nineteen Hundred Club on June 10, 1936, Neville Chamberlain, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, had used the phrase "the very mid-summer of madness".

<sup>4</sup> This document is initialled by Ribbentrop and marked by him: "[For] F[ührer]". It is stamped: "Submitted to the Führer".

<sup>5</sup> Dirksen sent a copy of this document in a letter to Weizsäcker, dated June 27 (2795/548035), which read as follows: "I send you the enclosed copy of a report which I have despatched to the Foreign Ministry by the same post. I have tried to describe in it a development which has assumed much clearer forms than is brought out in the report itself, but since I have no precise information I had to weigh my words carefully."

## No. 565

1593/384314-15

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, June 24, 1939.

zu W III 5025.<sup>1</sup>

After the Turkish Ambassador had recently made four or five fruitless attempts a day to reach me by telephone, I spoke to him on the telephone the day before yesterday, as the State Secretary had authorized me to do. He asked me to receive his Counsellor as he was not very well at the time and therefore could not come himself.

The Turkish Counsellor, whom I thereupon received yesterday, asked for a reply to the questions put by the Embassy about the start of the German-Turkish economic negotiations proposed to be held in May and about the deliveries of certain war material being withheld. He complained in animated terms that the Embassy had not succeeded in obtaining a reply in spite of several visits to me by the Ambassador, the despatch of three Notes<sup>2</sup> and countless telephone calls. His instructions were, without going into factual details, again urgently to request that the Embassy should be given a reply one way or the other. With regard to the economic negotiations, I told the Counsellor that I myself was not available at present. Apart from this, it did not seem to me that the negotiations were urgent as the Agreement had still until August 31 to run. The German Government had not yet reached a decision as to when negotiations were to take place. All he could report to his Government was that, in any case, we wished to postpone these negotiations at present.

On the question of deliveries of war material I held to my previous statement, namely that I had no information. We had passed on the Turkish enquiries to the competent departments, but their examination was obviously not complete.

I then told the Counsellor that we had been very surprised that the Turkish Government had recently made difficulties in a number of instances about the export of chrome ore from Turkey. The Counsellor assured me emphatically that this had only been due to a misunderstanding and that export was now completely free again.

At the conclusion of the conversation the Counsellor once more urgently asked us to give a final answer soon on both questions. The Embassy was receiving constant reminders from the Foreign Ministry in Ankara and no longer knew what reply to make.

CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> Only one, dated May 27, has been found; see documents Nos. 454, footnote 6, and 472.

Submitted to the State Secretary through the Director.

On instructions from the Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> the Turkish enquiries are to be dealt with in a dilatory manner. Nevertheless in the end it will not be possible to avoid giving the Turkish Government some explanation for the withholding of the Skoda and Krupp guns, the real reason for which they have naturally known for a long time. For the time being, however, my ten days' absence<sup>4</sup> can perhaps once again be used as a reason for further delay.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 483.

<sup>4</sup> Clodius left Berlin for negotiations in Bucharest and Sofia at the end of June 1939.

## No. 566

6640/E504536-38

### *Secret Protocol between Germany and Bulgaria*

The following agreement is made between the German Government and the Royal Bulgarian Government:

1. The German Government are agreed that the competent Bulgarian authorities shall place orders with German firms for the supply of aircraft material to an amount not exceeding ten million RM on the same terms<sup>1</sup> as agreed upon for the supply of training aircraft contracted in 1938 to the value of four million RM.

2. a) The German Government are furthermore agreed that the competent Bulgarian authorities shall buy war material in Germany from former Austrian and Czech stocks to an amount not exceeding twenty-five million RM.

b) Payment for this material is to be made by six equal half-yearly instalments, including interest, between January 1, 1942, and July 1, 1944.

The rate of interest is six per cent. Up to December 31, 1941, only the interest accruing as from the date of delivery shall be paid by half-yearly instalments.

Treasury bills shall be issued separately for the principal and for the interest.

c) Arrangements for the transfer of principal and interest shall be the subject of special negotiations between the competent Bulgarian and German authorities.

d) The negotiations on the conclusion of the various purchasing contracts shall be conducted by the competent Bulgarian authorities with the competent German authorities. The *Ausfuhrgemeinschaft für*

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

Kriegsgerät and the economic group "Luftfabrtindustrie" shall be requested to participate in carrying out these contracts.

e) In the event of part of the war material being reconditioned in Germany, at Bulgaria's request, the competent Bulgarian authorities shall, outside this credit, conclude the necessary contracts with the German firms concerned.

3. The Bulgarian Government are agreed that, for a certain proportion of the war material supplies, additional raw material deliveries shall be made to Germany by Bulgaria. These additional raw material deliveries are to be made within the next five years to a minimum amount of five and a half million RM per year and are to be paid through the clearing. These raw material supplies are primarily to consist of products of the Pirin Mining Company. As these supplies will not suffice to ensure the additional deliveries of raw materials to the amount of five and a half million RM per year, the Bulgarian Government declare themselves ready, with the assistance of German experts, to prospect in Bulgaria for further mineral deposits suitable for exploitation. German industry is to be called in, first of all, for the exploitation of such mineral deposits. The products of such exploitation of mineral deposits are to be delivered primarily to Germany, and at least in sufficient quantity to make possible the additional deliveries within the next five years to a minimum of five and a half million RM.

4. The agreements made in paragraph 3 above replace the provisions agreed upon in paragraph 6 of the Secret Protocol of March 12, 1938,<sup>2</sup> and in the fourth paragraph of the Secret Protocol of April 21, 1939.<sup>3</sup>

5. This Protocol comes into force on the day of signature and will be treated as secret by both Governments.

Done in duplicate in Berlin on June 24, 1939.

D. BOJILOV

P. DRAGANOV

R. RUSSEV

CARL CLODIUS<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 181.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 243.

<sup>4</sup> Clodius arrived in Sofia from Bucharest on July 10 (see documents Nos. 632 and 656). Meanwhile negotiations between a Bulgarian delegation and representatives of the OKW on deliveries of war material were conducted in Berlin, according to a report of June 29 (not printed, 5558/E395987-89) made by the latter to the Foreign Ministry, the substance of which was transmitted to Clodius in telegram No. 128 of June 30 to Sofia (not printed, 5558/E395990-92).

## No. 567

1625/388044-45

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BUCHAREST, June 25, 1939—3 p.m.

No. 279 of June 25

Received June 25—8 p.m.

Pol. II 2248.

With reference to my telegram No. 278 of June 24.<sup>1</sup>

According to the protocol on the negotiations in Ankara signed by Gafencu and the Turkish Foreign Minister, which the former read out to me, the Turkish Foreign Minister has promised not to refer to the Balkans and their security in the final agreement with Britain, and he has also done the same for the French agreement, but has said that he would not give an undertaking that Article 6 of the preliminary declaration with France would be suppressed. On his way back from Athens Gafencu wrote a letter once more expressly requesting the Turkish Foreign Minister to do this, because reference to the Balkans, even in a preliminary declaration, would be very unpleasant both for himself and for Greece. Gafencu also read this letter to me.

When I drew Gafencu's attention to an article in yesterday's *Universul*, in which Article 6 is welcomed, he immediately gave orders to the Head of the Propaganda Department that further comment on it in the Rumanian press should cease as being "not in conformity with and displeasing to Rumanian policy".

Gafencu told me that the plan for a Black Sea Pact had again been proposed to him in Ankara. He had rejected this just as emphatically as he had rejected renewed efforts to include Britain and himself in a Russian pact. It ought to be apparent to us from his attitude how loyal he was and indeed towards everyone.

I replied that I entirely believed in his good intentions; the others were obviously doing what they pleased with Rumania and were drawing him more and more into their orbit against his will. It seemed to me high time that he should at last publicly define his attitude to us.

The Foreign Minister seemed to realize this and promised to consult with the Minister President about it.

I suggest exerting influence along these lines on the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, with whom Gafencu is in touch.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 561.

## No. 568

103/111449-50

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 111 of June 25

Moscow, June 25, 1939—9:07 p.m.

Received June 25 [sic]—3:15 a.m.

[W 973 g.]<sup>1</sup>

With reference to my telegram No. 105 of June 17<sup>2</sup> and to your telegram No. 128 of June 20 (W IV 2290).<sup>2</sup>

Mikoyan asked Hilger to call on him this afternoon to communicate the following to him:

He had carefully considered the German Government's answer and had come to the following conclusion. Before he could go into the question of Schnurre coming here he had to know upon which points, according to the German view, there were differences of opinion between himself and us. He therefore asked that these points should be specified.

As instructed, Hilger replied that, after obstacles had been removed on the German side, the German Government expected the Soviet Government also to increase their latest offer of raw materials and thus bring it into line with the proposed German contribution. The remaining points still outstanding would be the subject of negotiations with Schnurre, who had the requisite plenary powers and knowledge on this. We considered this method expedient in the interests of speeding up the negotiations. Mikoyan replied that, none the less, he could not bring himself to take yet another risk since we had already placed him in an awkward position once before. If Hilger could not reply to his question, let him make enquiries in Berlin and then call on him again.

Despite all Hilger's objections Mikoyan insisted that Hilger should transmit to the German Government his request for an answer to the enquiry about existing differences of opinion.<sup>3</sup>

TIPPELSKIRCH<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (5460/E366672-73).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed; see document No. 543, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> In a telegram [No. 132] of June 28 (not printed, 5460/E366674), Weizsäcker asked for Schulenburg's comments on this telegram.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "We must not lose patience."



## No. 569

1625/388981-83

*Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep*

Moscow, June 26, 1939.

DEAR SCHLIEP: After my last two lengthy letters<sup>1</sup> I had actually not intended writing to you today, the less so as the Ambassador will arrive this afternoon. But at the tennis tournament in the Diplomatic Corps yesterday, I had an interesting conversation with the Italian Ambassador, the gist of which I do feel I ought to send you. Signor Rosso told me he had received a telegram from his Government, to the effect that, in the Italian Government's view, the moment had arrived for thwarting the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations which are proceeding in Moscow.<sup>2</sup> As he was not clear about how he was to carry out this task, he was looking forward with particular interest to the arrival of Count Schulenburg, as he supposed that the latter would have been given the necessary instructions. Signor Rosso then asked me what were my impressions as to the present position of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations and we found that we fully agreed in our views. As to the Far Eastern question, Signor Rosso told me he had received a telegram<sup>3</sup> from Rome, saying that he should report his views on this subject since it was persistently maintained on the German side that this question had played a decisive part in the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations.<sup>4</sup> As to this, Signor Rosso said it was not his impression that the Far Eastern question had hitherto arisen in the negotiations, but that, in his view, there could be no doubt that it would be broached by the Soviets in the further course of negotiations.

How the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations will proceed depends for the moment entirely on whether the British Government are prepared to make further concessions to M. Molotov. But since, in his speech before the Supreme Soviet,<sup>5</sup> he made it absolutely clear that the Soviet terms, as stated by him, were not being forced on anyone, but that they would not be departed from either, it appears that the British will make progress only if they more or less accept the Soviet point of view. Mr. Strang, who, I am told, is said to be a master of drafting,

<sup>1</sup> Of June 19 (not printed, 276/178383-87; 71) and of June 24 (not printed, 1256/338515-16). In the first letter Tippelskirch commented on the atmosphere in diplomatic circles in Moscow at the time of Strang's arrival there. In the second, from which only an extract has been found, Tippelskirch suggested that reports of Soviet deliveries of arms to Poland should not be treated too seriously.

<sup>2</sup> See also Editors' Note on p. 601 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 317.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.*, No. 310.

<sup>4</sup> A Tass communiqué denying a report to this effect in the German press had been published on June 21. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 114.

<sup>5</sup> On May 31. See document No. 463.

has obviously thought to be able to win the Soviets through the most attractive formulae possible. But, as it is, the Soviets do not trust such formulae. At the moment it looks as though the Soviets would feel most happy if the negotiations were to last over as long a period as possible, presumably because they feel that this would be the best way to prevent the major European Powers from arriving at an agreement.

I should like to add to my last letter of the 24th inst. that the Polish Commercial Attaché here<sup>6</sup> has, in a not unreliable manner, denied that Soviet munitions have been supplied to Poland. As it happened, an opportunity arose to ask him unobtrusively about this matter.

As you can imagine, I am most anxious to know what the Ambassador will bring. By the way, I intend to go on leave with my family on July 3. Should there be any objections to this plan, please may I ask that a brief telegram be sent to me at once. In this case I would let my family travel on ahead.

With cordial greetings from home to home,

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

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<sup>6</sup> W. Wolski.

## No. 570

103/111451

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 113 of June 27

Moscow, June 27, 1939—5:42 p.m.

Received June 27—8:30 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 132 of June 26.<sup>1</sup>

As I see it, Mikoyan's tactics can be interpreted as follows: Mikoyan does not want to see the talks with us broken off, but wishes to keep the negotiations firmly in hand, in order to determine their course at any time. Obviously it would not at present fit into the framework of the Soviet Government's general policy if a sensation were to be created by a resumption of the economic negotiations and in particular by repeated journeys of a special plenipotentiary to Moscow. The Soviet Government apparently believe that, by resuming economic negotiations at this particular moment, we intend to influence the attitude of Britain and Poland, and thereby expect to gain a certain political advantage. They are afraid that, as soon as we had gained this advantage, we might let the negotiations peter out again.

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed. See document No. 568, footnote 3.

There are in my opinion the following possibilities of dispelling this suspicion:

That I be instructed to propose to Mikoyan that a qualified special delegate should be sent to Berlin with all the necessary plenary powers in order to continue the negotiations there, and if possible bring them to a conclusion. In view of the tactics adopted by Mikoyan, this course seems to me to have far more prospect of success. If Mikoyan should decline, the possibility remains of entrusting me with the continuation of the economic negotiations in Moscow.

I may supplement the above considerations after I have had an opportunity of speaking with Molotov.

SCHULENBURG

## No. 571

1637/390080-89

### *Memorandum from the British Embassy*<sup>1</sup>

[BERLIN, June 27, 1939.]

Pol. I 229.

#### GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

In their memorandum of the 27th April last,<sup>2</sup> the German Government state that, in making their offer in 1935 to limit themselves to a percentage of the British naval forces, they did so "on a basis of the firm conviction that for all time the recurrence of a warlike conflict between Germany and Great Britain was excluded".

2. The German Government justify their action in terminating the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 1935, the Supplementary Declaration of 1937, and Part III of the Naval Agreement of 1937, on the ground that the attitude of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom showed that they now held the view that, in whatever part of Europe Germany might be involved in warlike conflict, Great Britain must always be hostile to Germany even in cases where English interests were not touched by such a conflict.

3. The question whether the attitude of His Majesty's Government can in any case justify the German Government in terminating these instruments without, at least, previous consultation between the two Governments is dealt with hereafter. It is not the case that in whatever part of Europe Germany might be involved in warlike conflict

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is in English in the original. A marginal note at the head reads: "Given to me today 27/6, afternoon, by the British Ambassador. Publication in the British press Thursday morning. W[eizsäcker] 27/6." See also document No. 572 and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 136. The memorandum was published in the British press on June 29.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 277.

Great Britain must always take up an attitude hostile to Germany. Great Britain could only be hostile to Germany if Germany were to commit an act of aggression against another country; and the political decisions, to which it is understood the German Government refer in their memorandum, involving guarantees by Great Britain to certain countries, could only operate if the countries concerned were to be attacked by Germany.

4. In the memorandum from the German Government the claim is made to describe British policy as a policy of encirclement. This description is without any justification, and indicates a misunderstanding and misreading of British purposes which must be corrected.

5. The action recently taken by the German Government to incorporate certain territories in the Reich, whatever may have been held by them to be the justifying reasons, has undoubtedly resulted in a great increase of anxiety in many quarters. The actions subsequently taken by the United Kingdom Government have no other purpose than to contribute to the removal of this anxiety, by assisting smaller nations to feel secure in the enjoyment of their independence, to which they have the same right as Great Britain or Germany herself. The commitments which Great Britain has recently undertaken in pursuance of this purpose are limited, and as stated above could only become effective if the countries concerned were the victims of aggression.

6. Nor have His Majesty's Government either the intention or the desire to restrict the development of German trade. On the contrary, under the Anglo-German Payments Agreement<sup>3</sup> a considerable supply of free exchange has been made available to Germany for the acquisition of raw materials. This agreement is as favourable to Germany as any which has been concluded, and His Majesty's Government would look forward to further discussion of measures for the improvement of Germany's economic position, if only the essential pre-condition could be secured, namely the establishment of mutual confidence and goodwill which is the necessary preliminary to calm and unprejudiced negotiations.

7. The consistent desire of His Majesty's Government, far from being the promotion of a war with Germany, has been and is to establish Anglo-German relations on the basis of the mutual recognition of the needs of both countries, consistently with due regard for the rights of other nations.

8. But, while for these reasons His Majesty's Government cannot agree that there has been any change in their policy or attitude which would justify the recent action of the German Government, they must

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<sup>3</sup> For the text see British White Paper, Treaty Series, No. 69 (1938), Cmd. 5581: *Anglo-German Payments (Amendment) Agreement: with Exchange of Letters between Representatives of the Governments of the United Kingdom and the German Reich regarding Negotiations for Mutual Trade Relations with Germany, London, July 1, 1938.*

add that in their view the main object of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement was to introduce an element of stability into the naval situation and to avoid unnecessary competition in armaments.

#### THE ANGLO-GERMAN NAVAL AGREEMENT OF 1935

9. For this reason the Agreements contained no provision for unilateral denunciation at the instance of one of the parties alone, but clearly contemplated termination or modification only by mutual consultation—a procedure which His Majesty's Government regret that the German Government have not seen their way to adopt in the present case. The Agreement of 1935, indeed, was expressly stated to be permanent in character, and His Majesty's Government would draw the attention of the German Government to the actual terms of the Exchange of Notes of the 18th June, 1935, which constituted the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of that year, from which both the character of the Agreement and the circumstances in which its modification was contemplated are made absolutely clear.

10. In the opening Note, Sir Samuel Hoare referred to the conversations which had taken place "the primary purpose of which has been to prepare the way for the holding of a general conference on the subject of the limitation of naval armaments". He then referred to the German proposal for a ratio of 100:35 between the Fleets of the British Commonwealth and Germany and said that "His Majesty's Government regard this proposal as a contribution of the greatest importance to future naval limitation". He expressed the belief that the Agreement would "facilitate the conclusion of a general agreement on the subject of naval limitation between all the naval Powers of the world".

11. In his reply of the same date, Herr von Ribbentrop recapitulated the terms of Sir Samuel Hoare's Note and confirmed that it correctly set forth the proposal of the German Government. He expressed the opinion that the Agreement "will facilitate the conclusion of a general agreement on this question between all the naval Powers of the world".

12. The wording of the Notes thus shows clearly that the Agreement was regarded as a contribution to the solution of the problem of naval limitation. If the German Government now allege that the Agreement has a different meaning, His Majesty's Government must observe that such an allegation finds no warrant in the terms of the Agreement itself, comprehensive and detailed though they were.

13. The Agreement was equally clear on the subject of its duration. In Sir Samuel Hoare's Note it is stated to be "a permanent and definite Agreement as from today". Herr von Ribbentrop in his reply stated that the German Government also regarded it "as a permanent and definite agreement with effect from today".

14. In paragraph 2(a) of the Notes it is stated that "the ratio of

35:100 is to be a permanent relationship, i.e., the total tonnage of the German Fleet shall never exceed a percentage of 35 of the aggregate tonnage of the naval forces of the members of the British Commonwealth."

15. In paragraph 2(c) of the Notes it is stated that "Germany will adhere to the ratio 35:100 in all circumstances, e.g., the ratio will not be affected by the construction of other Powers. If the general equilibrium of naval armaments, as normally maintained in the past, should be violently upset by any abnormal and exceptional construction by other Powers, the German Government reserve the right to invite His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to examine the new situation thus created". This was the only provision which contemplated any general modification (i.e., apart from the special case of submarines) of the terms of the Agreement; and it will be observed that the only condition foreseen that might entail modification was a violent disturbance of the general equilibrium of naval armaments. Moreover, under the terms of the Agreement modification could even then only take place after the situation had been examined in consultation with His Majesty's Government.

16. The German Government, however, do not maintain that such a condition in fact exists. Still less have they invited His Majesty's Government to examine the situation before taking their action. That such consultation was essential is further clear from paragraph 3 of the Notes, which states that His Majesty's Government recognized Germany's right to depart from the 35 per cent ratio in the circumstances contemplated by paragraph 2(c) "on the understanding that the 35:100 ratio will be maintained in default of agreement to the contrary between the two Governments".

17. Even if the memorandum which the German Government have now addressed to His Majesty's Government is intended to be read, not as a denunciation, but as a statement of the opinion of the German Government that His Majesty's Government have so acted as to cause the Agreement to lose its force, His Majesty's Government cannot admit that such a plea could properly be advanced without any prior consultation between the two Governments as a reason for non-compliance with the express terms of the Agreement.

#### THE ANGLO-GERMAN NAVAL AGREEMENT OF 1937

18. Considerations of a similar character apply to the German action regarding Part III of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of 17th July, 1937. This Agreement also makes no provision for unilateral denunciation or modification apart from the special cases contemplated by the so-called "escalator clauses" which are not here relevant. Apart from these, the Agreement is expressed to "remain in force until the 31st December, 1942".

19. This Agreement is, moreover, complementary to the London Naval Treaty of 1936,<sup>4</sup> to which France, Italy and the United States are also parties, and to similar agreements between His Majesty's Government and other naval Powers. All these instruments have as their object the avoidance of a useless and expensive competition in naval armaments. This may arise by one country producing special types of ships to which others feel they must reply; or by uncertainty as to the actions and intentions of others and the suspicion that large numbers of ships are being built which must then be matched by competitive building on the part of those affected. The qualitative limits of these agreements are therefore designed to prevent useless competition in types, and the provisions for exchange of information are designed to destroy unfounded suspicions of excessive building. Even if the relations between two countries were not good, this would not appear to His Majesty's Government to afford ground for terminating an agreement which eliminates unprofitable competition, and prevents a wasteful race in armaments which can benefit neither party.

#### QUALITATIVE LIMITATION

20. It is in the light of these considerations, presumably, that the German Government desire the "qualitative provisions of the Anglo-German Agreement of the 17th July, 1937, to remain unaffected". In principle, His Majesty's Government would share this desire: but they are bound to point out that the retention of the qualitative provisions alone will not suffice to create that feeling of mutual security, to which it was the purpose of the Anglo-German Agreement to contribute, and of which the provisions for the exchange of information were the expression. His Majesty's Government would, however, at all times be ready to consider with the German Government the possibility in the words of their Note of reaching "a clear and categorical understanding" on a sure basis.

21. From the terms in which the German Government announced their decision to retain the qualitative limits of the 1937 Agreement it is not clear what are the exact limitations by which they consider themselves to be bound in the matter of cruisers. The qualitative limits of cruisers are fixed by Article 6 (1) of the Anglo-German Agreement of 1937 as 8,000 tons displacement with guns not exceeding 6.1-inch calibre, and it is by this limit that all signatory Powers of the London Naval Treaty of 1936 are also bound. Although Article 6 (2) of the Anglo-German Agreement of 1937 permitted Germany under certain circumstances to increase her 8-inch gun cruiser tonnage, she

<sup>4</sup> The Treaty between the United Kingdom, etc., France and the United States of America for the Limitation of Naval Armament with Protocol of Signature and Additional Protocol, signed in London, Mar. 25, 1936. Italy acceded to this Treaty on Dec. 2, 1938. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 140, pp. 243-258.

was in practice precluded from building more than five such cruisers by the limits of her quota under the 1935 Agreements. Now that the German Government have terminated the latter Agreement, the position with regard to cruiser limits is no longer clear, but it is presumed that the limit to which the German Government intend to adhere is that of 8,000 tons and 6.1-inch guns. The German Government are requested to confirm this assumption.

22. The past forecasts of strength at the end of 1942 and 1943 that His Majesty's Government have made to the German Government have been given solely for the purpose of implementing the provisions of the 1935 Agreement. It is clear that no further forecasts will be necessary since they were designed merely to allow Germany to make full use of her 1935 quota. But if Germany is to be no longer bound to the limit of 35 per cent specified in the Agreement, it should be clearly understood that His Majesty's Government can no longer be bound by their past forecasts of strength, which must therefore be considered to be cancelled.

23. In the last paragraph of their memorandum the German Government declare that they are ready to enter into negotiations in regard to future problems, if His Majesty's Government desire to do so. As indicated above, there results from the recent German action a situation which is in some respects uncertain, and an exchange of views would help to clarify it. For instance, besides the question of tonnage and gun limits for cruisers, it is desirable to know whether the German Government intend to regard themselves as bound by all the articles of the Agreement of 1937 other than those in Part III.

24. If, however, what the German Government contemplate is the negotiation of another Agreement to replace those provisions which they have now terminated, His Majesty's Government would be glad to receive some indication of the scope and purpose which the German Government would consider appropriate to such an Agreement.

25. In particular His Majesty's Government desire to know, first, when, in the German view, discussions for the conclusion of such an Agreement should take place. Secondly, His Majesty's Government desire to know how the German Government would propose to ensure that any action in the shape of denunciation or modification of the new Agreement during the terms of its validity should carry the consent of both parties.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "[For the] Foreign Minister (despatch at once to Sonnenburg) Weizsäcker] 27/6." This document bears the stamp: "Submitted to the Foreign Minister." A minute of June 29 (not printed, 1637/390090) states that two copies of the memorandum had been given to Woermann, one to be given to Attolico. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 398.



## No. 572

1825/389074-75

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 519

BERLIN, June 27, 1939.

Pol. II 2468.

After handing over the memorandum on the naval question<sup>1</sup> today, the British Ambassador brought the conversation gradually round to general policy again.<sup>2</sup> One could sense that like the rest of the Diplomatic Corps here Henderson considers our relationship with Poland to be very strained and is afraid of an impending crisis. However, Henderson expressed his anxiety more in the form of a search for starting points for new German-British discussions. He thought that if only certain encouraging remarks were exchanged between Berlin and London the door would be opened more and more and finally a constructive exchange of views would come about. The Ambassador asked me again as he did a fortnight ago<sup>3</sup> whether the conclusion of the British talks in Moscow might not be beneficial for the initiation of German-British talks.

Using similar arguments to those used last time I told the Ambassador that the opposite was the case. British foreign policy would be completely incomprehensible to me unless I regarded it as emanating from domestic policy.

Henderson emphatically agreed with this and said he wished that the Labour Party were at the helm and not the Conservatives, for in reality Chamberlain was now obliged to pursue Labour's foreign policy and also to bear the odium for its setbacks. Henderson had an idea that the Führer would also touch on foreign policy at the launching of the ship on July 1.<sup>4</sup> He hopes that on this occasion the Führer will not be too violent against London. Henderson believed that the tone of Dr. Goebbels' latest speeches<sup>5</sup> had to be interpreted as hardly being inspired by the Führer.

The Ambassador's efforts to keep contacts with us were unmistakable. Unlike last time, however, he did not mention economic questions, the pause in armaments, and colonial questions as subjects for

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 571.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 161.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 521.

<sup>4</sup> The 10,000 ton heavy cruiser *Lützow* at Bremen.

<sup>5</sup> During his visit to Danzig for the celebration of the National Socialist Gau Cultural Week, Goebbels made three speeches, on June 17-18, in which he addressed himself to the future aspirations of Danzig. On June 25 he made a speech in Essen in which he included attacks on Britain. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Nos. 93 and 120, the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 143 and 144, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 323 and 324.

discussion but kept to more general suggestions. As he left he offered his services for anything he could do towards a resumption of talks. He said it was absolutely wrong to believe that Chamberlain had left the path of peace.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 573

5570/E398932

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, June 27, 1939.

MEMORANDUM ON THE CREDIT FOR WAR MATERIAL FOR YUGOSLAVIA

The negotiations on the Protocol for settling the German credit for war material for Yugoslavia have resulted in agreement. A copy of the Protocol is attached.<sup>2</sup>

The Yugoslav Government have asked the German Legation at Belgrade to obtain the sanction of the Reich Government to the signature of the Protocol. The Yugoslav Minister President has informed Consul General Neuhausen that the Yugoslav Government have decided to grant oil concessions to Germany to the extent desired by us, and that an agreement to this effect could be signed simultaneously with the Protocol on the armaments credit.

The Protocol does not specify a definite amount for the credit nor does it provide an allocation of the total amount to aircraft and to other war material. With regard to the delivery of aircraft equipment, Field Marshal Göring has reserved his decision on a total of possible deliveries until July 6, after he has reported to the Führer, probably on July 5. As the amounts are not specified in the Protocol, it can be signed now, independently of the later fixing of the amounts.<sup>3</sup>

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister with the request to sanction the signature of the Protocol by Minister von Heeren.

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Schmidt's handwriting: "Previous paper to memorandum of 29.6". See document No. 586.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5570/E398933-36). The text is identical, except for the omission of the names of the signatories, place and date, with that of the Protocol as signed, which is printed as document No. 620.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Yes. R[ibbentrop]".

## No. 574

103/111434

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*

By Courier

PERSONAL

BERLIN, June 27, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: I have received your letter of June 16<sup>1</sup> about Italian relations with Soviet representatives and I have pleasure in acknowledging its receipt. I have submitted the letter to Herr von Ribbentrop and have not yet received it back from him. Probably he has made use of it during his recent visit to the Berghof.

Whether we shall get as far as negotiating with Moscow in the economic field is not yet quite clear. The Russians are very slow and cautious in this question as well. Perhaps they do not want to have Schnurre in Moscow at the same time as Strang.

We are without any clear information from Moscow or London as to what the outcome of the Anglo-Franco-Russian talks is likely to be. I personally believe that the Russians will continue to take their time but will also not let things come to a breakdown, for, in the event of a premature breakdown, Moscow might fall between two stools. On the other hand, the British Government seem prepared to make every concession.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler,

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 536.

## No. 575

2705/548023-30

*Ambassador Bülow-Schwante to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

BRUSSELS, June 27, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: With reference to my letter of June 12,<sup>1</sup> I should like to report the following to you today.

On the occasion of a dinner at Minister President Pierlot's, I had the opportunity, on June 22, of having a conversation of some length with the Minister of War, General Denis. At first the conversation moved along general lines—the international flying display on June 9, the visit of Colonel General Milch and such topics. I took the opportunity of saying outright to the Minister of War that it was known in Berlin that the Belgian General Staff had initiated talks with the French General Staff. M. Denis, who did not give the impression of being at all surprised at this remark, said in a very soldierly manner, I quote his exact

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 517.

words: "You are an ex-officer and I am an officer. As such, I give you my word of honour that since the King introduced the policy of independence, the Belgian General Staff has conducted no talks whatsoever either with the French or with the British General Staff." When I replied that, since 1936, therefore, there had been no further relations of this kind with the French General Staff, the Minister of War corrected me expressly by saying: "since 1935". Finally he said that, in his capacity as a member of the Cabinet, he could assure me most formally that there was not a word of truth in the Berlin report. Thereupon he quite spontaneously offered me his hand, to emphasize the sincerity of his assertion by shaking hands. In conclusion he once again stressed that this whole question was so delicate and difficult that, from the start, Belgium must in all circumstances avoid everything which might give the slightest cause for false conjectures or speculations.

If I said above that the Minister of War showed no signs of surprise at my remark, it must be kept in mind that, in view of the present public discussion of the question whether military agreements are compatible with the policy of independence, he must naturally have expected the German representative to broach this question to him at the first opportunity.

Furthermore I asked the Military Attaché to tell the Chief of the General Staff on the occasion of a conversation on current topics, that the Minister of War's statement to me had greatly interested me. The Military Attaché saw the Chief of the General Staff this morning, and for his conversation I refer you to his report of today's date.<sup>2</sup>

At all events the statements by the Minister of War and by the Chief of the General Staff will not lull our suspicions.<sup>3</sup>

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

BÜLOW-SCHWANTE

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> The document is marked for submission to Ribbentrop and bears his initial.

## No. 576

34/23209-11

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, June 28, 1939.

zu W 993 g.<sup>1</sup>

MEMORANDUM ON TELEGRAM No. 113 OF JUNE 27 FROM MOSCOW—  
W 993 g.<sup>1</sup>

The two possibilities suggested by the Ambassador—negotiations to be conducted in Berlin or by the Embassy in Moscow—are not in our interests.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 570.

## 1) Negotiations in Berlin.

The only Soviet official really in a position to make decisions is People's Commissar Mikoyan himself. In the case of negotiations in Berlin, the Trade Representative here<sup>2</sup> would probably be entrusted with them or at best, an official of the Commissariat for Foreign Trade, which is subordinate to Mikoyan. The same performance as we have had at all German-Soviet negotiations in Berlin in recent times, would be repeated. The Soviet representative would have no latitude whatever for decisions or even for discussions; for fear of Moscow he would consult Moscow on every question however insignificant, an interminable time would elapse and M. Mikoyan, as *spiritus rector*, would assume an even more intransigent attitude behind the scenes than if he were sitting at the conference table himself. The negotiations would either peter out or, at best, lead, after an interminably long time, to an economic treaty which certainly would not represent, from the economic point of view, what we wish to have. Apart from this, the political aim we are pursuing by means of the negotiations would vanish completely into thin air. Seen from the political angle, there would be a vast difference between negotiations conducted here with a minor Soviet official from the Foreign Trade Commissariat and those conducted, through a special German delegate in Moscow, with Mikoyan himself, who is not only Commissar for Foreign Trade but also Deputy Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars.

2) In the case of negotiations by the Embassy in Moscow, the political aim we are pursuing would not be achieved either. From the political point of view, the value of the economic negotiations conducted by us in Moscow consisted in establishing closer contact with the Russians through another channel than that of the Ambassador. This would not apply if the Ambassador henceforth conducted the negotiations himself.

From the tactical point of view, fresh negotiations by the Embassy cannot be described as promising. As the final economic policy has not yet been defined with the departments in Berlin and also cannot yet be defined, in view of the present state of the negotiations, the Embassy will be obliged to consult Berlin on every modification. Consequently instructions to the Embassy can never be detailed enough to provide for all eventualities. Every reply given from here to Moscow on questions of detail must be discussed with the departments. This procedure, just as in February,<sup>3</sup> will result in negotiations conducted by the Embassy coming to a halt because of difficulties either in Berlin or in Moscow.

3) If, therefore, owing to the political situation, People's Commissar Mikoyan is unable to agree to conducting negotiations in Moscow, as

<sup>2</sup> E. Babarin.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 486-495.

he himself originally proposed, it would be better to postpone the question of the negotiations entirely, since any other way will neither produce the political advantage expected by us nor bring us the clarity necessary for a decision on the economic possibilities existing *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union.

SCHNURRE

## No. 577

452/223402

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Dirksen*

BERLIN, June 28, 1939.

Sent June 30.

DEAR HERR VON DIRKSEN: Many thanks for your letter of the 27th instant.<sup>1</sup> The inclination of British circles to enter into discussions with us on outstanding questions is occasionally also shown here by Henderson. I take it that you also have by you the memoranda on our conversations here with Henderson.<sup>2</sup> However, the concrete suggestions which Henderson advances can still hardly be regarded as constructive.<sup>3</sup>

Best wishes and Heil Hitler,  
Yours etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 564, footnote 5.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 521 and 572.

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "To U.St.S. Woermann before despatch. 2) Please send Herr v. Dirksen's original report for submission to the Foreign Minister."

## No. 578

73/51902-06

*The Hungarian Minister to the State Secretary**Copy*

362/B-1939

TOP SECRET

To be opened personally.

ROYAL HUNGARIAN LEGATION

BERLIN, June 28, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: With reference to our conversation this morning I respectfully beg to send you a memorandum containing

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum of June 29, St.S. No. 525 (not printed, 73/51893), Weizsäcker recorded that the Hungarian Minister had that day expressed his Government's desire to undertake with the Axis Powers preparatory work on the organization of war economy and said that he would present a memorandum on this later. As the Minister had referred to the Chief of the Hungarian General Staff, General Werth, visiting Berlin, Weizsäcker had stated that preparations for war economy were divided amongst several departments, and coordinated by the Foreign Ministry. He had not discussed the possibilities of meeting the Hungarian request.

a Hungarian proposal for tripartite talks between Germany, Italy and Hungary on measures to be taken in the field of war economy.

I should be particularly grateful for an early communication of the German point of view by Your Excellency.<sup>2</sup>

I am, my dear State Secretary, with great truth and regard,  
Yours etc.,

SZTÓJAY

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<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of July 1 (not printed, see document No. 527, footnote 6) Weizsäcker stated that he had briefly informed Attolico of the Hungarian request and that Germany did not wish Hungary to join the German-Italian war economy commission as third partner.

[Enclosure]

*Copy*

TOP SECRET

BUDAPEST, June 21, 1939.

362/B—1939

#### MEMORANDUM

The Hungarian Government are pursuing a policy of peace and they are aware that the German Reich too is guided in all its actions by the motive of honourable peace. None the less, the possibility cannot be dismissed that, in the extremely difficult, and, so to speak, daily fluctuating situation in foreign affairs, where there is constantly some degree of tension, such conflicts may arise from the imagined, or actual, vital interests of individual nations, as cannot be resolved by normal diplomatic methods.

Naturally such an aggravation of the continuing tension can emerge even overnight, and therefore the Hungarian Government regard it as their duty to take this factor, before all, into consideration when expanding their national economy. This economy is being reorganized, on a short and long term basis, and for this very reason it is impossible to make changes or adjustments from one day to another; and it must furthermore be taken into account that the new Hungarian land reform is now about to be put into effect. It therefore appears necessary to ascertain as accurately as possible to what extent and in what form the Axis Powers have included Hungarian raw materials, semi-finished goods etc., in their economic planning for the event of war.

We need to know this in order to be prepared for all eventualities for at least the next one to two years, and so to arrange our measures in the field of economic policy and national economy, as to be able to plan for the war economy of our own nation on the one hand and on the other to get ready to fulfil possible requirements of the Great Powers friendly to us, Germany and Italy, and thereby prevent cases of dislocation or even of friction from arising at a crucial moment.

The German Reich is aware that Hungary is linked to Italy by bonds of close friendship, as a result of which we entered into certain economic

commitments to Rome many years ago, which are generally known.<sup>3</sup> In the course of talks, of a "non-binding" character, during recent weeks, Italian military circles have already touched on the question of war economy and certain outlines, although so far only of principles, are already beginning to take shape from the talks.

The Hungarian Government deem it essential to hold similar discussions on matters of principle, temporarily of a non-binding character, with the military leaders of the German Reich. The Hungarian Government have attempted, in the past, to initiate such discussions with the German Reich. In view of our extremely intimate and harmonious relationship with both Axis Great Powers, it seems very important now to determine jointly the scope of war economy, at least in principle, in order to be prepared for all contingencies and to know in advance, in as much detail as possible, what is expected of us and what we are to expect in return from the two Great Powers, should the occasion arise. Therefore it seems indicated that the competent military leaders of the German Reich, Italy and Hungary, be empowered to negotiate with one another as soon as possible on the inter-related economic and military question of war economy, and that they should lay down in advance directives for all eventualities, i.e., for the possibility that:

- a) The Axis Powers become jointly and simultaneously involved in war.
- b) the Axis Powers become severally involved in war.
- c) Hungary remains outside the conflict at first.
- d) Hungary becomes involved in the war immediately, i.e., simultaneously.

Apart from the fact that any of the above possibilities may occur, our present economic commitments, and also the Italo-German military Alliance, make it absolutely essential for tripartite negotiations to be conducted on these questions.

The Hungarian Government beg to request the Government of the German Reich to inform them, as soon as possible, whether they are willing to empower the military leader representing the German Reich to hold "non-binding" talks with the Chief of the Royal Hungarian General Staff on the subjects set out above.

If the Government of the German Reich share the view of the Hungarian Government that the talks are necessary and urgent, would they be good enough to state when and how they would consider it most suitable to bring the Italian Government's competent military representative into the discussions. That is, whether the Hungarian Government are to take the initiative in this matter with the Italian

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<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Rome Protocols signed with Italy and Austria in March 1934.



Government, or whether the Reich Government wish to make arrangements for convening such a tripartite military conference.

Naturally the negotiations would not go beyond the preliminary discussions, setting of objectives, agreements on principle and possibly recording them, such as are customary between General Staffs of friendly Powers. The German Reich Government can rest assured that these matters will be treated with the greatest secrecy on the Hungarian side.

The Hungarian Government re-affirm their peaceful intentions and assure the German Government that they are firmly resolved to attain their national aims within the utmost bounds of possibility, entirely by their own efforts, and that they do not intend to undertake anything which might involve the German Reich and Italy in a war against their will.

The discussions would be concerned with matters of principle and would merely serve the purpose of ensuring that the requirements of our friends (Germany and Italy) would also be taken into account in the course of planning our economic reorganization. But they also appear to be necessary because the recent past has shown that smooth and friendly cooperation calling for an all-out effort is impossible without an advance organization designed to meet all possible contingencies.

As regards the setting of any possible dates for the discussions, the Hungarian Government beg to state that General of Infantry Henrik Werth, Chief of the Royal Hungarian General Staff, will be going to Berlin early in July<sup>4</sup> at the invitation of the highest German military authorities.

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<sup>4</sup> He was received by Hitler on July 5.

## No. 579

524,238016-17

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

SECRET

Moscow, June 29, 1939—2:40 a.m.

URGENT

Received June 29—7:20 a.m.

No. 115 of June 28

Pol. V 1487 g.

This afternoon I had an interview with Molotov who received me as soon as I asked to see him. The interview lasted over an hour and proceeded in a friendly manner.

I described to Molotov the impressions which I had gained in Berlin from conversations with authoritative persons, and in particular with the Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup> I pointed out that, as the State Secretary had

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<sup>1</sup> No record of these conversations has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives, but see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 376 and 377.

told the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin,<sup>2</sup> we should welcome a normalization of relations between Germany and Soviet Russia.<sup>3</sup> For this, we had furnished a number of proofs, such as the restraint shown by the German press, the conclusion of the Non-Aggression Pacts with the Baltic States,<sup>4</sup> and the desire for a resumption of the economic negotiations. From all this, it was evident that Germany did not harbour any evil intentions towards the Soviet Union, particularly since the Treaty of Berlin<sup>5</sup> was still in force. On the German side, we would also continue to take advantage of any opportunity to prove our goodwill. On the other hand, we were still waiting for an answer from the Soviet Union to the question as to what Molotov meant, in his last conversation with me,<sup>6</sup> by "the construction of a reorganized basis".<sup>7</sup> We also objected to the attitude of the Soviet press.

Molotov replied that he had taken note<sup>8</sup> of my communications with satisfaction; the Soviet Government's foreign policy was, in accordance with the public statements of their leaders, directed towards cultivating good relations with all States. This naturally applied—provided that there was reciprocity—to Germany too. He noted with interest that in the opinion of the German Government the Berlin Treaty was still in force, particularly since the Soviet Government had had doubts about this. As to the question of non-aggression pact treaty negotiations [*sic*]<sup>9</sup> with the Baltic States, Molotov remarked that Germany had concluded them in her own interests and not for the benefit of the Soviet Union. He must doubt the permanence of such treaties after the experiences Poland had had, to which I retorted that Poland had herself brought about the termination of the treaty by joining a combination of Powers hostile to us, which was incompatible with friendly relations with us.

On the question of a resumption of economic negotiations, Molotov referred to the last conversation between Mikoyan and Hilger. Molotov showed himself to be informed, approved Mikoyan's attitude and suggested that we should give Mikoyan the desired information. After this question was settled, Schnurre's intended<sup>10</sup> visit here might perhaps prove useful.

My impression is that the Soviet Government are greatly interested in learning our political views and in maintaining contact with us. Although there was no mistaking the strong distrust evident in all that

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 451.

<sup>3</sup> The Moscow draft (127/69549-51) here reads: "the Soviet Union"

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

<sup>5</sup> Of Apr. 24, 1926. See document No. 490.

<sup>6</sup> On May 20. See document No. 424.

<sup>7</sup> The Moscow draft here reads: "construction of a political basis".

<sup>8</sup> The Moscow draft here reads: "that he took note".

<sup>9</sup> The Moscow draft here reads: "As to the question of the non-aggression treaties with . . ."

<sup>10</sup> The Moscow draft here reads: "After this question was settled, a visit by Schnurre here might also perhaps prove useful".

Molotov said, he nevertheless described a normalization of relations with Germany as being desirable and possible. Furthermore, progress can be seen in the fact that Molotov, in connection with the resumption of economic negotiations, this time did not mention the prior construction of a political basis, but confined himself to Mikoyan's demand.

I request telegraphic instructions as to whether and in what form Mikoyan's requests, also put forward by Molotov, should be complied with. (cf. our telegrams Nos. 111<sup>11</sup> and 113<sup>12</sup> of 25th and 27th of this month.)

SCHULENBURG

<sup>11</sup> Document No. 568.

<sup>12</sup> Document No. 570.

## No. 580

8273/E588194

*The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in Poland*

Telegram

No. 157

BERLIN, June 29, 1939—11:35 a.m.

zu Pol. I M 2270 g II.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Counsellor von Nostitz.

With reference to our instructions of May 13 (Pol. I M 1548 g).<sup>2</sup>

Report by telegram whether *Königsberg* visit has already been formally announced to the [Polish] Government or when it is intended to do so. The timing is left to your discretion.<sup>3</sup>

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed; the report of the Consulate General in Danzig, dated May 31, referred to in document No. 378, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 378; the instructions contained therein were sent to the Embassy in Warsaw under this file number.

<sup>3</sup> Moltke replied in telegram No. 131 of June 29 (8273/E588204): "Announcement of the *Königsberg's* visit made on June 26", of which the Foreign Ministry informed the High Command of the Navy on July 5 (8273/E588206). The Polish Government's acknowledgement, dated July 5, was transmitted by Moltke in translation on July 6 (not printed, 8287/E588332-33).

## No. 581

1625/388990

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

LONDON, June 29, 1939—1:48 p.m.

SECRET

Received June 29—2:50 p.m.

No. 222 of June 29

Pol. II 2329.

I. The formula for the pact negotiations with the Soviet Union as

furnished to the British Ambassador in Moscow today with the approval of the British Cabinet and after France had agreed, is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

The three contracting Powers promise each other mutual assistance by all means:

- 1) Should one of them become the object of direct attack.
- 2) Should one or more countries, whose integrity is declared to be a matter of vital interest by one of the contracting Powers, become the object of attack.

The British Ambassador in Moscow has further been authorized to assent to the Soviet demand for listing the names of the States which the contracting parties have in mind, if it should not be possible to obtain the desired result without making this concession. If, however, such a list is to be compiled, the Ambassador is instructed to make it a condition that Holland and Switzerland be also included.

The substance of the French and British instructions admit of the conclusion that the demands hitherto put forward by the Russians are to be met in full.

II. The impression that the Soviet Government are conducting the pact negotiations without enthusiasm and would not be disappointed by their failure is confirmed by information which the Russian Air Attaché<sup>2</sup> here gave, on his own initiative, to the assistant of the German Air Attaché. He stated that the Soviet Government were not interested in concluding the pact with Britain and France<sup>3</sup> and he also readily gave information on what he had gathered about the British air rearmament. On this follows a separate report<sup>4</sup> by the Air Attaché.<sup>5</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 151.

<sup>2</sup> Brigade Commander Ivan Cherny.

<sup>3</sup> The text of this telegram, as far as this point, was repeated on June 30 (1625/388987) to the German Embassies at Moscow, Warsaw and Paris.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> Lt.-Gen. Wenninger.

## No. 582

1625/388972-73

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 117 of June 29

Moscow, June 29, 1939—11:46 p.m.

Received June 30—8:10 a.m.

Pol. II 2324.

Zhdanov's article published in today's *Pravda* under the title "British and French Governments do not want a treaty on the basis

of equality for the Soviet Union"<sup>1</sup> (text transmitted by DNB) reproaches Britain and France with dragging out the negotiations and deliberately complicating them, in order to wreck them and then exploit this for agreement with the aggressors. The sincerity of France and Britain must be doubted. The guarantee of the Baltic States was an artificially created stumbling block and a question over which Britain and France showed particular lack of good will and sincerity.

Zhdanov's article has received a great deal of attention in diplomatic and journalistic circles here, because, since the writer is one of Stalin's confidants, the article was doubtless written on orders from above, and Zhdanov in December 1936 made the well-known threatening statements to the Baltic States,<sup>2</sup> and because the article is published just when the negotiations have entered a critical stage and the Soviet Government—as in *Pravda* when Strang arrived—again insist on their demand for automatic assistance to the Baltic States. It is thought here that the purpose of the article is as follows:

1) To influence public opinion in Britain and France, to strengthen opposition to Chamberlain and to compel the British Government to give way.

2) To lay the blame on Britain and France for the long duration of the negotiations and for their possible breakdown. In this sense the article may have been intended as a reply to the leading article in the *Temps* of June 24.<sup>3</sup>

Zhdanov's statements are therefore regarded here first and foremost as a blackmailing manoeuvre against Britain and as an expression of the Soviet Union's unchanged mistrust. The impression prevails that the Soviet attitude to the question of the guarantee of the Baltic States has stiffened. Zhdanov's remark that his statements were his own personal opinion, and that his friends did not share his reasoned doubts of the sincerity of the Anglo-French intentions, indicates that the Soviet Government are leaving the back door open for continuing the negotiations, even if Britain should not give way a hundred per cent.

I note that today's Soviet press states simultaneously that, in contrast to last year when the Red Army manoeuvres took place in White Russia and the Ukraine, they are to be carried out this September in the Leningrad military district.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> For a translation of this article see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 193, enclosure. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 395 and 403.

<sup>2</sup> The reference appears to be to a speech made by Zhdanov, Secretary of the Communist Party for the Leningrad District, on Nov. 29, 1936, to the Eighth All Union Congress of Soviets.

<sup>3</sup> *Le Temps* had referred, in a leading article of June 24, to the delaying tactics used by Russia despite the goodwill shown in the negotiations by Britain and France, in particular by their recognition of the principle of absolute reciprocity and their readiness to admit that Russia's security might be endangered by a violation of the neutrality of the Baltic States, who, however, could not be guaranteed against their will.

## No. 583

103/111454

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff*

SECRET

BERCHTESGADEN, June 29, 1939.

To the Minister's Secretariat.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to Count Schulenburg's telegram concerning the Hilger-Mikoyan conversation,<sup>2</sup> the Führer has decided as follows:

The Russians are to be informed that we have seen from their attitude that they are making the continuation of further talks dependent on the acceptance of the basis for our economic discussions as fixed for January. Since this basis was not acceptable to us, we would not be interested in a resumption of the economic discussions with Russia at present.

The Führer has agreed that this answer be delayed for a few days.<sup>3</sup>

I have informed the Foreign Minister of this by telephone and am sending this Note only as a guide for the competent official in a conference with the Minister.<sup>4</sup>

HEWEL

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Herewith submitted to State Secretary von Weizsäcker, Sch[midt] 29.6.39." Weizsäcker initialled this paper on July 10 and circulated it to Woermann and Wiehl with a request for its return.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 570.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting against this paragraph: "Has meantime been despatched." See also document No. 588.

<sup>4</sup> An unsigned minute headed "Instructions from the Führer on June 30, morning, from the Berghof" (not printed, 2092/452626) repeats these instructions with slight verbal differences.

## No. 584

169/82640

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 526

BERLIN, June 29, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister told me today that his Government intended to remonstrate with the British Government on the grounds that Britain's new guarantee to Rumania<sup>1</sup> had directly caused the Government in Bucharest to treat the Hungarian minority in Transylvania even worse than before. M. Sztójay asked me whether I thought such a communication were better made privately or officially in London.

I told the Minister that, in my opinion, there was nothing against

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 189.

bringing this officially to the notice of the British Government. Naturally, however, I took it that the relevant Hungarian communication in London contained no threats which could not be carried out.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 191.

## No. 585

3062/611799

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 528

BERLIN, June 29, 1939.

The Hungarian Minister today drew my attention to the fact that if Rumanian orders for arms placed in Germany were met in full, this would considerably strengthen the Rumanian army. Orders for a thousand guns had been placed with Skoda, up to 1941, among them some of 24 and 15 cm. calibre. That Rumania would be ranged against the Axis Powers in the event of war was, in the Hungarian view, certain. M. Sztójay suggested going into the question as to whether the brake might not be applied to some extent on these arms deliveries to Rumania.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On July 4, Wiedl submitted, with reference to the document here printed, a memorandum (not printed, 2104/455677-79) to the State Secretary reviewing the position on arms deliveries to Rumania, as set forth in a previous memorandum dated June 3 (not printed, 2104/455680-86). He minuted on his paper: "I will see to it that we go slowly, without endangering important Rumanian supplies."

<sup>2</sup> This document is initialled by Ribbentrop and marked: "[For] F[ührer]".

## No. 586

5570/E398987

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, June 29, 1939.

W 1074 g.

Subject: Signature of the Protocol on the Armaments Credit for Yugoslavia.

A telegram<sup>1</sup> has been received today from Minister von Heeren, which says that our Air Attaché in Belgrade has the impression that the French are offering considerable armaments credits there, and that since on the Yugoslav side there are still doubts as to whether the German armaments credit will materialize, there is a certain inclination to take

<sup>1</sup> No. 201 of June 28 (not printed, 5570/E398921).

up the French offer. An earlier report by the Air Attaché of June 15<sup>2</sup> had already referred to a Yugoslav order for 50 British aeroplanes, and stated that Yugoslav "side-stepping" was due to uncertainty about whether the German armaments credit would materialize.

On June 27 the Yugoslav Minister here communicated to State Secretary von Weizsäcker the request made by the Yugoslav Foreign Minister to the Reich Foreign Minister, that from the point of view of foreign policy he should take up the question of direct delivery of two consignments of guns for aircraft and tanks, as, should delivery be delayed, there might arise politically undesirable difficulties and ill-feelings in Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> This matter will be taken further by me and I shall report later on its settlement.<sup>4</sup>

In consequence of the above, it appears that approval for the signature of the Protocol on the German Armaments Credit to Yugoslavia, as requested in my memorandum of June 27,<sup>5</sup> is a matter of urgency.

Herewith submitted through the State Secretary to the Foreign Minister.<sup>6</sup> WIEHL

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5570/E398919-20).

<sup>3</sup> Weizsäcker had recorded this request in a memorandum. St.S. No. 515 of June 27 (not printed, 483/231559), where he stated he had promised the Yugoslav Minister that the matter would be dealt with.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note against this paragraph: "Yes. R[ibbentrop]".

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 573.

<sup>6</sup> Appended to this document is a minute of July 1 (5570/E398938) from Schmidt to Wiehl which reads: "The enclosed memoranda [i.e., this document and document No. 573] have been submitted to the Foreign Minister and are returned herewith. Instructions by the Foreign Minister are understood to have been issued direct through the Adjutants' Office at Sonnenburg". Wiehl minuted on it: "Yes, to the effect that signature should take place as soon as possible. Instructions sent to Belgrade by telephone on 1.7. W[iehl] 3/7". See also document No. 615.

## No. 587

F12/348

*SS-Gruppenführer Heydrich to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

III 1123 AZ g. Rs./39 Pos./Kr.

[BERLIN] June 29, 1939.

No. 1198/39 g. Rs.

Received June 29.

TOP SECRET

RM 33 g. Rs.

DEAR PARTY COMRADE VON RIBBENTROP: Enclosed I am forwarding to you a further report<sup>1</sup> on the followers of Voldemaras. As already

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (F12/347-43). This unsigned, undated memorandum reported information from leading members of the Voldemaras movement on the situation in Lithuania and their own plans; they had decided to found a secret National Socialist party, to exploit anti-semitism in Lithuania and to embarrass the Government. The passage to which Heydrich specially refers stated that, in addition to asking for financial support, one of their leaders had asked for arms, but had been told this was impossible and that his organization must confine itself to more or less legal activities. A memorandum by Doertenbach dated July 19 (not printed, F12/353-52) stated that the movement had, in agreement with the Foreign Ministry, been receiving small sums but no arms, and recommended continuing on these lines but giving no large sums until the movement had proved itself capable of effective intervention in Lithuanian politics.



mentioned in the previous report,<sup>2</sup> the followers of Voldemaras are continuing to press for assistance from the Reich. I therefore request that the question, again raised by the followers of Voldemaras, of financial assistance, as set forth on page 4 paragraph 2 of the enclosed report, be examined and a final decision made.

In my opinion the request from the followers of Voldemaras for financial assistance could be granted but in no circumstances should deliveries of arms be made.<sup>3</sup>

Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

HEYDRICH

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (115/117566-69); this report had been sent on Apr. 24.

<sup>3</sup> On Aug. 8, Weizsäcker replied (not printed, F12/364) to Heydrich that the Foreign Ministry agreed with the refusal to supply arms, and considered financial support could be given through suitable agents to the extent of RM 2-3,000 a quarter.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On June 29, 1939, a Franco-German Agreement was signed in Paris which prolonged until June 30, 1940, the Trade and Payments Agreements of July 10, 1937 (*Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1937, Part II, pp. 207-518), provided for the application to the Protectorate of the Franco-Czechoslovak Trade Agreement of March 7, 1939, and dealt with the credits, hitherto blocked in France, for Czech imports.]

## No. 588

524/238018

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 134

BERLIN, June 30, 1939—1:50 p.m.  
zu Pol. V 1487 g.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 115.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister has taken note of your telegraphic report on your conversation with Molotov. He is of the opinion that in the political field enough has been said until further instructions and that for the moment the talks should not be taken up again by us.

Concerning the possible economic negotiations with the Russian Government, the deliberations here have not yet been concluded. In this field too you are requested for the time being to take no further action, but to await instructions.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 579.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Approved by telephone by the Reich Foreign Minister (through Secretary of Legation Gottfriedsen). S[iegfried] 30/6." See also document No. 583.

## No. 589

1625/388995

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Latvia*

Telegram

No. 103

BERLIN, June 30, 1939—5:20 p.m.

Pol. II 2335.

Please avail yourself of a convenient opportunity during the next few days to ascertain from the Latvian Foreign Minister whether Britain or Russia have informed the Government there of negotiations in Moscow on a guarantee of the Baltic States. On this occasion, please state that, in the event of an Anglo-Russian guarantee being given to Latvia, even in a veiled form, we expect the Latvian Government to give fresh expression to their will to neutrality, as affirmed on the conclusion of the German-Latvian Non-Aggression Pact,<sup>1</sup> by unequivocally rejecting the guarantee, as incompatible with the Non-Aggression Pact. Tallinn and Helsinki are receiving identical instructions.<sup>2</sup>

Report by telegram.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 76 to Tallinn of June 30 (not printed, 1625/388997) and No. 111 to Helsinki of June 30 (not printed, 1625/388999).

<sup>3</sup> For the reply from Riga see document No. 608. In telegram No. 68 of July 3 (not printed, 2771/536932) Frohwein reported that he had had a preliminary conversation with the Estonian Vice Foreign Minister who said that the Estonian Government had not been informed of the course of the Anglo-Soviet negotiations on guarantees by either party, and would not accept a guarantee even if couched in veiled terms. Subsequently, in telegram No. 71 of July 6 (not printed, 1625/389064-65) he reported a conversation with the Estonian Foreign Minister, who confirmed that his Government had not been informed, and stated they had already protested in London and Paris against inclusion of Estonia in an Anglo-Franco-Soviet guarantee, but remained non-committal on the subject of the further protest suggested by Frohwein. In telegrams Nos. 89 and 90 of July 5 (not printed, 7891/E571452 and 1625/389067) Blücher reported that he had been told by the Finnish Foreign Minister that the Finnish Legation in London had received a denial from the Foreign Office of press reports on a guarantee, and that should such a guarantee be given, he would propose its rejection to his Cabinet, making his continuance in office dependent on this. Blücher's telegram No. 90 also contained the Finnish views on the Aalands question, quoted in document No. 626.

## No. 590

1625/389093

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 199 of June 30

TARABYA, June 30, 1939—2:15 p.m.

Received June 30—5:35 p.m.

[Pol. II 2337]<sup>1</sup>

I hear from a reliable source that the British wish to enlist Turkey

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (1625/389091).

into guaranteeing Rumania's non-Balkan frontiers in return for a British guarantee of the frontiers of Thrace. The same may apply to Greece. I have made an appointment to see Numan in the next few days in order to make the strongest representations against an extension of such guarantees beyond the Balkan Pact. I suggest similar representations in Bucharest, because such a measure could only be interpreted as an unfriendly act against ourselves and Hungary.<sup>2</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "State Secr[etary]. To discuss. R[ibbentrop]." (ii) "U[nder] St[ate] S[ecretary] Pol[itical Department]: The F[oreign] M[inister] is of the opinion that the same clear language should be held in Bucharest as in Ankara. W[eizsäcker] 8/7." A marginal note in Woermann's handwriting on a Schmidt minute of July 3 (not printed, 1625/389092) submitting this telegram to Weizsäcker, reads: "Bucharest was informed by telegram No. 250 [of July 1 (not printed, 7891/E571481)]. Of his own accord the Minister then made the appropriate *démarche*."

## No. 591

174/135979

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Japan*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 207

BERLIN, 30 June, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

With reference to [our telegram] No. 198.<sup>2</sup>

During the last ten days you have not furnished any further reports on the alliance question.<sup>3</sup> The Japanese Ambassador in Berlin has also meantime remained silent.<sup>4</sup> In view of developments in the British negotiations in Moscow, we are, however, greatly interested to learn the result of the deliberations of the Five Minister Conference, referred to in your telegram No. 257.<sup>5</sup> We request you, through your contacts or other suitable channels and with due regard to the instructions in our telegram No. 198, to ascertain the necessary information forthwith and report promptly on the present situation by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 553.

<sup>3</sup> The draft of this telegram has the words here: "so we assume that there is no progress to report", which were deleted before despatch.

<sup>4</sup> The draft has the words here: "and is at the moment on a short visit to Moscow, as to the purpose of which he told us nothing before his departure", which were deleted before despatch.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 548.

## No. 592

1570/380027-30

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 286

BERLIN, June 30, 1939.<sup>1</sup>  
[Pol. V 726 g. Rs.]<sup>2</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

The Foreign Minister has again prescribed the oral instructions and guidance on language to be held, given you during your visit here:<sup>3</sup>

It is a matter of keeping up the pressure which has been brought to bear on Poland since the denunciation of the German-Polish Agreement of 1934,<sup>4</sup> in order gradually to bring Poland to reason. There is, however, no present intention of giving this pressure the character of an ultimatum by stating precise German demands or time limits.

In diplomatic conversations, and in particular with the French Foreign Minister, the following language should therefore be held on the problem of Poland:

Daily experience had shown that there existed in Poland a nationalist group composed of private societies, party organizations, provincial government officials and especially army circles, which, in their delusion, incited to excesses against everything German and to making reckless demands on Germany, and this not merely to maintain the present status of Polish territory and Polish influence in Danzig. These circles even dreamed and talked about a conquest of East Prussia, a battle of Berlin and the like.

Alongside, but without sufficient control over the first group, there existed a second, more moderate group. We were inclined to include the Polish Foreign Minister in this second category too, for we had reason to believe that Minister Beck, though without a definite programme, was yet seeking a settlement with Germany.

Which of the two sections, the unbridled nationalist or the relatively moderate, would gain the upper hand was uncertain. We were awaiting developments with composure and simply watching closely the happenings in Poland. We were not giving up hope that reason would emerge and prevail in Poland,<sup>5</sup> for we were not seeking a conflict but

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from another copy (799/273849).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 552 and footnote 1 thereto. A memorandum by Weizsäcker, St.S. No. 513 of June 27 (not printed, 54/36406), shows that Welzeck was then in Berlin; see also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 367. No record has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives of instructions telling him to come to Berlin or given him by Ribbentrop during the visit.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 276.

<sup>5</sup> The draft of this telegram has the words here which were deleted before despatch: "Be it through Poland's own insight or through the influence of Poland's friends".

a solution of the problem. Moreover we could hardly imagine that a reasonable Pole would want to expose Poland's destiny to the lightning and annihilating German knockout blow, which would then have to be expected. The only acute danger we could see of a disturbance to the peace of Europe lay, therefore, in a policy of harakiri induced by such Polish excesses that Germany, as a great and patient nation, could no longer continue, as hitherto, to overlook them.<sup>6</sup> It would be very desirable if this coming to reason were not too long delayed, for to drag out for years differences such as those between Germany and Poland was, after all, a serious matter and involved accepting a heavy responsibility viewed under the aspects of higher general European interests.

End of guidance on language to be held.<sup>7</sup>

As is evident from the foregoing, there is no intention of contradicting the impression given to Bonnet and Coulondre by your conversations that a solution of the Polish problem is planned for within 1939, but rather it should be your task to obliterate such an impression and to let it be regarded as superseded. Therefore should Bonnet ask you whether it was not intended here to settle accounts with Poland before the end of 1939, your reply should be that you have just returned from Berlin and heard the above statements made by the Foreign Minister himself and that you must naturally regard them as the only authoritative ones.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>6</sup> The draft of this telegram has the words here, which were deleted before despatch: "Even if sufficient insight did not exist in Poland perhaps she was at least not so far abandoned by her friends that their exhortations might not produce the requisite sobriety."

<sup>7</sup> The text of this telegram up to this point was repeated on July 4 (799/273850-52) to the Embassies in London, Rome, Warsaw, Tokyo, Moscow and Washington.

## No. 593

1025/880004-05

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 224 of June 30

LONDON, June 30, 1939

Received July 1—8:50 a.m.

Pol. II 2342.

Lord Halifax's speech yesterday<sup>1</sup> was influenced by three different currents of public opinion here, and by Halifax's intention to define his attitude in consequence.

1) Public opinion here is influenced by a strong wave of propaganda from Jewish, American, French and Polish sources, which tend to represent a German *coup* against Danzig as imminent.

<sup>1</sup> At a dinner given by the Royal Institute of International Affairs. For the text of this speech, see the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 25.

2) Public opinion here has been stiffened far more than appears on the surface by the extremely sharp attacks in the German press and by various speeches.

3) The tendency mentioned in despatch No. A 2492 of June 24<sup>2</sup> to seek a constructive policy towards Germany, through recognizing that the encirclement action involves dangers to peace, persists in Government circles, whereas public opinion must first become accustomed to this idea.

Halifax's speech represents the attempt to harmonize three divergent trends. According to the observations of his listeners he did not achieve this aim even among the small circle of guests at yesterday's dinner. The conciliatory passages in his speech did not meet with the applause he expected, whereas the aggressive passages were more loudly applauded than he himself seemed to have anticipated.

This effect is even more pronounced on looking through this morning's press. Not only the traditionally anti-German *Daily Telegraph* but also *The Times* publish sharp leading articles against Germany. There is relatively more understanding in the opposition press, as for instance in the *Daily Herald*. The intention of Jewish-French propaganda to sabotage, if possible, the constructive features of the speech thus seems in large measure to have been achieved.

Halifax has still shown no understanding for the point of view, fundamental for the assessment of the speech, that the German public judges Britain's attitude purely by her actions, which are at present entirely devoted to the further development of the encirclement front, while it ascribes tactical significance to the more or less friendly utterances made in public speeches. Otherwise he would not, within the space of ten days, have made three different speeches with the same basic theme.

Further I draw your attention to the statements on the colonial question which, for the first time since December 1937,<sup>3</sup> present a more concrete formulation both politically and economically.

The text of the speech is being despatched simultaneously.<sup>4</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 564.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is presumably to Lord Halifax's visit to Germany in November 1937, when this question was discussed; see vol. I of this Series, document No. 31.

<sup>4</sup> In report No. A 2599 of June 30 (not printed, 1408/361280).

No. 594

1625/389016-17

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 529

BERLIN, June 30, 1939.  
e.o. Pol. II 2370.

As instructed I asked the French Ambassador to call on me this

afternoon.<sup>1</sup> I first ascertained that he intends to go on leave in about a fortnight, that is, after the celebration of July 14. Hereupon I remarked that this information was welcome in as much as the Foreign Minister would still be able to see him before his departure on leave, in accordance with the wish the Ambassador had expressed. Herr von Ribbentrop hoped to be in Berlin in the middle of next week for the Bulgarian visit.<sup>2</sup> Thereafter a visit by Coulondre to the Ministry could perhaps be arranged.

After a few more personal remarks, the Ambassador turned the conversation to the general political situation. I answered by referring to Britain's obdurate encirclement policy, which appeared to be designed to intimidate us, but was naturally achieving the opposite. This also applied to France, although our press in the main addressed its reproaches to London. Particularly surprising to me was the British illusion that the alleged danger of war could be allayed through the negotiations with Moscow.

When Coulondre went on to mention the problem of Germany and Poland and again expressed himself pessimistically on account of certain news about preparations within Danzig,<sup>3</sup> I held up to him the excesses and speeches of prominent Poles as, for example, again today, the speech rejoicing in conquest by General Kwasniewski.<sup>4</sup> I then developed to Coulondre something of the line of thought in the latest instructions to Count Welczeck.<sup>5</sup> The Ambassador showed a certain relief when I said that in my opinion we were not on the eve of a great *éclat* unless Polish excesses provoked this. That would then be *finis Poloniae*.

At this point Coulondre repeated the remark he had made before, that France was under no obligation in the event of provocation by Poland. But if war broke out as a result of arbitrary action by Danzig, neither France nor Britain could hold back. It would be a great and tragic error to believe that, in such a case, France would stand aside, painful as war would be for the whole of France.

I ridiculed the idea that Great Britain could suddenly have placed the decision on war or peace for the Empire in the hands of somebody or other in Warsaw, in the Corridor, or even in Moscow. Coulondre, however, insisted that since last March Britain and France no longer trusted to international peace and were therefore entering upon engagements which they would not have thought of formerly.

The Ambassador, however, did not come out with the assertion that Germany wanted to settle accounts with Poland already in the course

<sup>1</sup> See also the *French Yellow Book*, No. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Kiosseivanov's visit on July 5-7; see documents Nos. 617 and 618.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 599.

<sup>4</sup> This appears to be a reference to the speech made at Warsaw on June 29, by General Kwasniewski, Chairman of the Sea and Colonial League.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 592.

of this year. Rather he attributed his anxiety to the threatening quasi-military preparations in Danzig, and, over and beyond, to the lack of self control of France's Polish friends.

I described my remarks as personal and reserved for the Foreign Minister an authoritative statement of our views to M. Coulondre.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 595

78/51911

### *Minute by an Official of Political Division I*

BERLIN, June 30, 1939.

During today's conference with Colonel General Keitel, Hungary's request to enter into preparatory talks with the Axis Powers concerning war economy was also dealt with.<sup>1</sup> There was agreement that we should not call the Hungarians into our discussions with the Italians, but that we should get into touch with them at a later date.

HEYDEN-RYNSCH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 578.

## No. 596

2092/452627-28

### *Minute by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, June 30, 1939.

#### NOTE ON THE ATTACHED DIRECTIVE<sup>1</sup>

1) We have already informed the Russians in Hilger's oral statement of June 17<sup>2</sup> that we decline to commit ourselves in advance on the Soviet counter proposal of February 1939<sup>3</sup> and wish to negotiate on it. People's Commissar Mikoyan in his next conversation with Hilger<sup>4</sup> did not revert to his original demand for the acceptance "in substance" of the Soviet counter proposal of February, but he then asked that we should tell him which points in our opinion were still open. Molotov, in his conversation with the Ambassador on June 28,<sup>5</sup> himself adopted this attitude of Mikoyan's and also asked that Mikoyan should be given the desired information.

2) From the conversations referred to above it follows that the

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<sup>1</sup> This directive is the telegram to Moscow, originally dated June 28, and here printed as document No. 628.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 543.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 491.

<sup>4</sup> On June 25. See document No. 568.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 579.



Russians no longer maintain the standpoint originally taken up by Mikoyan, for a commitment in advance to the Soviet counter proposal of February 1939. Moreover, the main reason for the dilatory answers of the Russians is probably not to conduct German-Soviet negotiations in Moscow at the same time as the British-Soviet negotiations, which are taking place in Moscow. While, on the Soviet side, everything is being done to delay a decision on the resumption of negotiations, on the other hand the Soviets are unmistakably endeavouring not to break off all ties, and to keep open the possibility of resuming negotiations with us at a time tactically more favourable to them.

3) I would therefore suggest despatching the telegram of June 28 which contains the answer to Mikoyan's last question.

SCHNURRE

### No. 597

174/135980-S1

#### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Tokyo, July 1, 1939—3 p.m.

No. 277 of July 1

Received July 1—5 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 207 of June 30.<sup>1</sup>

For the State Secretary personally.

Since my telegram No. 257 of June 20,<sup>2</sup> in numerous conversations with my confidants, I have not been able to obtain complete clarity regarding Japanese reservations, since, obviously, the formula for agreement is still not being interpreted in exactly the same way by the various departments. The reported consternation in the Cabinet became evident to me first of all by the marked reticence shown by my confidants, especially those from the Army. They made it plain how much the rejection of the formula for agreement, so laboriously achieved, was regretted and hinted that Italy would probably have been prepared to accept it. I also gained the impression that the opponents of the alliance are at present making greater capital of the alleged German threat to enter into contact with the Soviet Union if necessary;<sup>3</sup> I have of course energetically contradicted such hints and have pointed to the machinations of hostile propaganda, in particular the tendentious reports during the last few days from Paris and Warsaw. For the rest, I have been at pains to keep the conversation concentrated on the factual points of difference contained in your information [telegram] No. 194.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 591.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 548.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 529, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 538.

Gradually I have obtained the following still conflicting picture:

1) Oshima's interpretation. The Minister President confirmed it to me entirely, letting me know three times, through confidants. So did the Army, although they contradicted this in the same conversation by saying that the Navy refused the automatic entry into war if the Soviet Union were not a participant. Oshima's detailed telegram is at present being studied by the Navy. I conclude from this that the Navy was not a party to all the supplementary instructions given to Oshima.

2) Statement on limited military capacities. Confidants from the Foreign Ministry and the Cabinet see in the exchange of notes a reservation in principle by Japan on the lines of Ambassador Shir. . . (syllable missing) [atori]. On the other hand the Minister President and the Army stress only the formal necessity of recording such an important fact in writing; they indicate, however, the possibility of meeting this by making an oral statement and only recording it in a secret protocol of negotiations.

The Five Minister Conference has not yet been resumed; for the time being there are only separate conversations between the Ministers. The delay has its reason in that the Cabinet is preoccupied with the Tientsin question, and furthermore, in my opinion, by the attitude of cautious wait and see towards the increasing deterioration of the European situation (Danzig, Anglo-Russian negotiations).

I expect a gradual revival of the Five-Minister negotiations, in which case the Army has expressed its determination to go still further in meeting the German demand for a definite alliance. General Machijiri, however, referred very gravely to the difficulties met<sup>5</sup> in drafting more precisely the formula of agreement already reached, and in eliminating reservations. The Army and all other confidants urgently requested that the absolutely sure loyalty to the alliance of all the Japanese partners, within the utmost possible limits, should not be doubted.

OTT

<sup>5</sup> The text is here obscure; it reads "*erlangten Schwierigkeiten*", i.e., literally "the difficulties achieved".

## No. 598

3039/800590-92

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Yugoslavia*

Telegram

No. 174

BERLIN, July 1, 1939—10:00 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 3734 II.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 191.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 544.

Count Csáky has informed our Minister in Budapest<sup>2</sup> that the Yugoslav Minister has repeatedly, though in very vague terms, reverted to a proposal for concluding a kind of Hungarian-Yugoslav friendship agreement, with provisions on minorities, which would be possible if Hungary promised to bring in Rumania, at least later. Further the Yugoslav Minister recalled the idea, mentioned, as previously reported, by the Yugoslav State Secretary to the Hungarian Minister in Belgrade, for forming a neutral bloc consisting of Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Hungary.<sup>3</sup>

Whereas Csáky had previously informed our Minister, in connection with the Yugoslav proposal for the setting up of a neutral bloc of the four States, that the matter had come to an end because of Gafencu's negative attitude to the Hungarian proposal for the conclusion of a minorities agreement,<sup>4</sup> he has now told our Minister that he will continue to treat these proposals evasively and will not enter into any negotiations until he knows the views of the Axis Powers on the subject.

Please approach the Yugoslav Government regarding this plan now, without waiting for the return of the Hungarian Minister.

For your information: A bloc consisting of Yugoslavia, Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary could be of interest to us only if it meant the end of the Balkan bloc in its old form, that is, if it would mean Turkey and Greece leaving it. This, however, does not appear to be intended by the Yugoslav Government, and certainly not by the Rumanian Government. Since Turkey's feeler over the cession of part of Dobruja to Bulgaria has failed, and as the Rumanian Government refused to entertain Bulgarian aspirations, we are convinced that the formation of such a bloc would in no way serve Bulgaria's national aspirations. Neither would Hungary derive any advantages from such a bloc, as her clash of interests with Rumania could not be resolved by it either. Yugoslavia seems rather to be holding out prospects of forming such a bloc, since she will not agree to a direct settlement with Hungary unless Hungary promises simultaneously to negotiate with Rumania.

We leave it to you whether to make use of such ideas. If so please give them as preliminary views of your own.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> Reported by Erdmannsdorff in telegram No. 200 of June 28 (not printed, 73/51891), from which the remainder of this paragraph is a direct quotation.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 503.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 519.

## No. 599

8359/E590551

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 133 of July 1

WARSAW, July 1, 1939—11:25 p.m.

Received July 2—3:10 a.m.

Pol. V 6119.

Although the latest events in Danzig, in particular the formation of a discreet<sup>1</sup> defence corps and the arrival of guns from East Prussia, have received no special mention in the Government newspapers here, they have in fact been watched with apprehension by the Polish public and reported in alarmist form by the sensational press.<sup>2</sup>

At yesterday's press conference, it was stated in this connection that the Danzig action was at present regarded only as a new weapon in the war of nerves. However, it was not yet possible to judge whether it might not be intended as provocation, in order to force Poland into the expense of general mobilization. The Polish Government were biding their time, maintaining calm and not allowing themselves to be provoked. Neither would they allow themselves to be caught unawares by any *fait accompli*. Any action which violated Polish rights in Danzig would immediately result in Polish counter action.

By the emphasis put on a calm but firm attitude the Government obviously intend not to allow the nervousness and the warlike mood, increased by the many celebrations of the "Week of the Sea",<sup>3</sup> to reach a pitch which might prejudice their freedom of action.

The contention of the Polish press that the British Ambassador's journey by air to London yesterday was caused by events in Danzig is untrue. Though he did speak critically to me about the measures of the Danzig Senate and describe them as provocative, I know that already a week ago he had fixed his departure on leave for June 30.

MOLTKE

<sup>1</sup> The Warsaw draft (8368/E590643-44) here reads: "volunteer".

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 606 and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, chapters III and IV *passim*; the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 145, 146 and 147; and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 384 and 415.

<sup>3</sup> Celebrated from June 25 to July 2 throughout Poland under the auspices of the Polish Sea and Colonial League. An account sent by the German Consulate General in Toruń, dated July 11 (not printed, 8265/E586069-79), referred to large scale demonstrations in Gdynia, in which Poles from Danzig took part.

## No. 600

2763/536263

*Minister Renthe-Fink to Senior Counsellor Grundherr*

No. 248 B.

COPENHAGEN, July 1, 1939.

Received July 3.

Pol. VI 1721.

DEAR GRUNDHERR: In case Dr. Möller's Knivsberg speech should not yet have come to your notice, I enclose a cutting from the *Nord-schleswigsche Zeitung*.<sup>1</sup> His statements about the frontier question and the Greater German Reich planned by the Führer are to my mind completely superfluous and politically quite out of place. Lachmann<sup>2</sup> has received instructions from me to intimate this to Dr. Möller in a friendly way.<sup>3</sup>

With best regards and Heil Hitler!

Ever yours,

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>1</sup> Not reprinted (8043/E578332-35). In this speech on June 25 at the "Borderland Manifestation" [*Grenzland-Kundgebung*] on the Knivsberg, Dr. Jens Möller, leader of the German National Group in Denmark, speaking in his capacity as leader of the National Socialist Party in North Schleswig, had expressed his views on (i) the existing German-Danish frontier, (ii) Danish policy towards the German minority. He had concluded his speech by saying: "Our Führer is the man who has put aside Versailles; in his spirit and with his ideas we shall get rid of that piece of Versailles in our native land which threatens to poison our life. We know that we can do it, the Führer has shown the way, we follow and march!"

<sup>2</sup> German Consul in Aabenraa.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "It would perhaps be a good thing if Möller also received a hint from the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle. W[örmann]." (ii) "Has already been attended to. Möller will be severely reprimanded by Obergruppenführer Lorenz. D[oertenbach] 4/7."

## No. 601

2134/467411-12

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 532

BERLIN, July 1, 1939.

When he called today the Italian Ambassador once again touched upon the present political situation.<sup>1</sup> He handed me a document setting out the opinions expressed by Professor Burckhardt, High Commissioner in Danzig, which he had received through the Italian Consulate General in Danzig. A copy is attached.

Attolico then remarked that the Italian information from Danzig must be causing considerable alarm in Rome. According to a report from the Italian Consul General, it concerned the formation of a free

<sup>1</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 427.

corps made up of men who had already been employed in the case of Czechia, that is to say, two to three thousand men; the security police were being reinforced and better armed, barracks and pontoons were being built, bridges were being strengthened. Motorized troop reinforcements had been despatched to East Prussia. These outward appearances gave the impression of action being imminent.

I told Attolico how I had spoken to Coulondre yesterday.<sup>2</sup> This information seemed to interest him. Moreover, as I was able to observe, Attolico himself is already using his influence within the Diplomatic Corps to the same end as the instructions given yesterday to Count Welczeck<sup>3</sup> on language to be held.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 594.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 592.

[Enclosure]

In the opinion of Professor Burckhardt, High Commissioner in Danzig, developments in the situation of the Free City have taken an unpleasant turn; not only has no *détente* been brought about between Poland and the local authorities (complete implacability on both sides) but indeed the orders which seem to be coming from Berlin are causing the gravest concern.

Almost immediately after the Reich Minister of Propaganda had made his speeches<sup>4</sup> great activity in military preparations began to be noticeable. This can no longer be concealed today and, apart from being to the highest degree dangerous for the future, it appears to constitute an element of immediate danger. From all this, it may be assumed that even the possibility of a general conflict cannot be ruled out and it is painful to think that this local quarrel, of no vital importance to any of the interested parties, might be the cause of a conflict the extent of which no one is able to foresee.

Professor Burckhardt is observing with growing anxiety how hopes, which could still be entertained three weeks ago, are fading in consequence of the course of events. The task of those working for a peaceful solution is becoming extremely difficult. Thus he has been forced to conclude that, since his last trip, there are views prevailing in the West which have become stronger since January and which, at this stage, no longer permit of solving unilaterally questions which, in other circumstances, could be easily settled.

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 572, footnote 5.

## No. 602

F10/422-23

*Note from the French Government*<sup>1</sup>*Copy.*

July 1, 1939.

I received Herr von Ribbentrop in Paris a few months ago, and I signed with him the Franco-German Declaration of December 6, 1938.<sup>2</sup>

The personal relations which I formed with him on that occasion make it my duty at the present moment to point out to him very definitely the position of the French Government, and to leave no doubt in his mind about the determination of France.

In December last, I clearly specified to Herr von Ribbentrop that the Franco-German declaration—in conformity, for that matter, with the stipulation contained in Article 3—could not be considered as affecting the special relations of France with the countries of Eastern Europe.

In so far as Poland, more particularly, is concerned, events since then have produced a strengthening of the French alliance. M. Daladier definitely indicated in his declaration of April 13 last<sup>3</sup> the scope of the engagements by which the two countries are now linked.

Today I make a point of recalling these commitments to Herr von Ribbentrop's very special attention, and of stressing the unshakable determination of France to fulfil them by exerting all her strength in support of her pledged word. At a moment when measures of all kinds are being taken in Danzig, whose scope and object it is difficult to appreciate, it is particularly essential to avoid any risk of misunderstanding about the extent of the obligations and about the attitude of the French Government: a misunderstanding whose consequences might be incalculable. I therefore regard it as my duty to state definitely that any action, whatever its form, which would tend to modify the *status quo* in Danzig, and so provoke armed resistance by Poland, would bring the Franco-Polish Agreement into play and oblige France to give immediate assistance to Poland.

<sup>1</sup> Translated from the French. This Note was delivered by Bonnet to Welczeck on July 1; see document No. 603.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 369-372.

<sup>3</sup> On the occasion of the announcement of the guarantees to Greece and Rumania; see document No. 188, footnote 1.

## No. 603

2771/536930-31

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 352 of July 1

PARIS, July 2, 1939.

Received July 2—1:45 a.m.

[Pol. V 738 g. Rs.]<sup>1</sup>[Pol. I 727 g. Rs.]<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 286 of June 30.<sup>2</sup>

The Foreign Minister asked me to call on him this afternoon to discuss the political situation. The conversation lasted over an hour.<sup>3</sup> As the telegram of instructions on the language I should hold,<sup>2</sup> following the Reich Foreign Minister's personal instructions to me, had arrived this morning, I was able to go into great detail with Bonnet and to warn him against the catastrophic policy into which France, in Britain's wake, was apparently allowing herself to be drawn under unfavourable conditions, whilst I set our military and economic strength in the strongest light. The Foreign Minister first described very fully his services in the cause of an understanding with Germany and in bringing about the Munich Agreement, which, by excluding the use of force in future, was to form the basis for a settlement of all Germany's just claims. This hope had unfortunately proved false, and for this reason combinations had arisen to prevent any use of force. No one regretted this more than he, for the Eastern questions could certainly have been solved at the time by means of negotiation. Even now he still believed in this, but, to achieve it, the present state of tension on our Eastern frontier and especially in Danzig must give way to a calmer atmosphere. I replied that he should admonish his Polish allies to keep calm. Bonnet answered that he had repeatedly done so, and was always prepared to exert his influence to this end at the appropriate moment. He could give me a solemn assurance that though both France and Britain were convinced that, after terrible blows and devastation, they would win in the end, no responsible Government authorities wanted

<sup>1</sup> Copies of this telegram and of the French Note (document No. 602) were forwarded by Woermann to Mackensen with a despatch of July 10, under the file number Pol. V 738 g. Rs. (not printed, 2130/465874-77). It can be inferred from a despatch of July 17 (not printed, 121/119530) bearing the file number Pol. V 782 g. Rs., that copies were also sent to the Embassies in London, Warsaw, Tokyo, Moscow and Washington. Schulenburg in Moscow had already been sent copies of these papers by Schliep with a letter of July 5 (not printed, 276/178366 and 276/178559-61) under the file number Pol. I 727 g. Rs.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 592.

<sup>3</sup> For Bonnet's account of this interview see the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 149-150; see also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 212, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 464.



war. For Europe, however, there were no other alternatives but domination or cooperation. Domination would be resisted to the last breath, even if this meant ruin. When I interjected that there could be no question of domination, least of all as regards France, Bonnet answered that the policy of a free hand in the spheres of interest of any country could not go so far as to bring parts of a neighbouring country under any form of subjection *manu militari*; for this the dwelling house of Europe, in which the peoples lived together confined within so narrow a space, was too small. I replied that to discuss this subject would lead too far; I could only tell him that, up to now, we had borne the Polish acts of provocation and oppression of our kith and kin with dignity and remarkable composure, but that one day our patience might be exhausted and then the Polish army would be annihilated at a blow, before effective help from elsewhere could be forthcoming. Here Bonnet put in that France and Britain would, if necessary, see to it that acts of provocation did not occur. I took note of this and expressed the hope that German-Polish relations would improve and that the Poles would then become more reasonable. Finally Bonnet referred to the relations of friendship and trust which he had established here with the Reich Foreign Minister, and which allowed him to hand me a personal Note,<sup>4</sup> the contents of which I should bring to the knowledge of the Foreign Minister in suitable form. He—Bonnet—was convinced that, considering the methods and horrors of modern warfare, the people of every country would shortly call the leading statesmen to account as to whether everything had been done and said clearly enough to prevent war. This was why he had also put his words on paper. The Note, which is being sent by air, contains, after an historical introduction, the assurance of France's unshakable determination to fulfil her alliance obligations. It ends with the sentence: "I therefore regard it as my duty to state definitely that any action, whatever its form, which would tend to modify the *status quo* in Danzig, and so provoke armed resistance by Poland, would bring the Franco-Polish Agreement into play and oblige France to give immediate assistance to Poland."<sup>5</sup> A remark also of possible interest, during the conversation, was about the negotiations on an alliance with Russia. On this Bonnet said that he indulged in no great illusions as to the value and realization of a Triple Alliance. The Franco-Soviet Russian Pact was in itself sufficient for alliance obligations.

WELCZECK

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 602.

<sup>5</sup> This quotation is in French in the original.

## No. 604

1588/338435-36

*The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 5477

SAN SEBASTIÁN, July 2, 1939.

Received July 5.

Pol. III 1594 g.

Subject: Hispano-Italian negotiations on the occasion of Ciano's visit.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to the assertions of the foreign press that, on the occasion of Ciano's visit to Spain, important Hispano-Italian negotiations would be conducted or even political agreements be concluded here, the Foreign Minister assured me yesterday that all these reports were false. It was also incorrect that negotiations had been conducted in Rome by the Spanish Minister of the Interior, Serrano Suñer.<sup>2</sup> It was merely a matter of general discussions which would be continued here on the occasion of Count Ciano's stay. To my remark that we had a start on Italy in respect of a number of agreements made with Spain, the Spanish Foreign Minister replied in the affirmative, adding that nevertheless no Hispano-Italian negotiations on such subjects were envisaged at present. As to the Treaty of Friendship with us,<sup>3</sup> Italy was known to have an entirely similar Protocol, concluded in 1936,<sup>4</sup> with which indeed we were already familiar.

When I asked a question of detail, based on private reports, about negotiations with Italy on Mediterranean questions, and particularly about the possible future use of Spanish ports by Italy, the Foreign Minister's reply was also in the negative.

STOHRER

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<sup>1</sup> Ciano visited Spain, July 10-18, 1939. See documents Nos. 654 and 663.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 506, 507 and 525, also vol. III of this Series, document No. 805.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 773.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 137.

## No. 605

1588/338415-17

*The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 923 g.

SAN SEBASTIÁN, July 2, 1939.

Pol. III 1535.

Subject: Alleged statements to the press by the Spanish Generals Aranda and Kindelan on the question of Spanish neutrality.<sup>1</sup>

In a conversation which I had recently with the Spanish Foreign

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<sup>1</sup> According to reports in *The Times* of June 17 and 21 General Kindelan, Chief of the Spanish Air Force, while on a mission to Italy, had given an interview to *La Stampa* on

Minister in Burgos on Hispano-French relations, I also mentioned the alleged statements which General Aranda was reported to have made to a British journalist during his stay in Berlin. As is known, the Spanish General is alleged to have said that in the event of a European conflict Spain would remain neutral.

Although I at once added that General Aranda had already satisfactorily denied these statements whilst still in Germany, the Foreign Minister told me emphatically that he had also immediately spoken to Aranda about it, and that the latter had told him of his own accord that he had never said anything of the sort:

I took the opportunity of pointing out to the Spanish Foreign Minister, as I had already done a few weeks ago,<sup>2</sup> that it would not be expedient either for Spain or for us if the Spanish Government were to show their cards in advance over the attitude they would adopt in a possible war. What we expected at present from Spain, in the event of a European war, was, as he knew, expressed in the Führer's letter, in his own hand, written to General Franco in March.<sup>3</sup> But it would be a grave error to bring this to the notice of Germany's potential opponents in such a war just now.

On the contrary we must attach the greatest importance to Spain's attitude in a future war remaining a completely unknown quantity for France and Britain. This would not only tie down French forces on the Pyrenees frontier but above all would also serve the cause of peace, as the intentions of France and Britain for armed intervention in problems which were no concern of theirs would be greatly discouraged by the fear that Spain might side with the Axis.

The Minister agreed with me on all points and emphasized, as he had done before during our previous talk on the subject, that Spain had no thought of committing herself politically in advance in any way or of surrendering her freedom of action.

Out of consideration for my colleague, I have not discussed with the Minister the statements which had been put into the mouth of the Spanish Ambassador in Paris by the French press<sup>4</sup> (*Matin*, *Petite*

<sup>2</sup> No record has been found.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Lequerica, the Spanish Ambassador, had called on Bonnet on June 20 and was believed (as reported in *The Times* of June 21) to have informed the French Foreign Minister that General Kindelan's recent statement to *La Stampa* did not correspond with the views of the Franco Government and that Spain was in no way committed to the Axis in a military sense. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 315 and 689.

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June 15, in which he was reported to have said that if Italy were involved in war "none of the Spanish Services, the Air Force least of all, will be able to remain impassive". A few days later General Aranda, Head of the Spanish Military Mission to Berlin, whilst on an official visit there, declared to a British newspaper correspondent that Spain would assume no obligations towards foreign countries except in the form of commercial and cultural treaties.

*Gironde*, etc.) on Aranda's alleged interview and on the remarks made in Italy by the Chief of the Spanish Air Force, General Kindelan, but have merely discussed them in a friendly manner with the Under Secretary of State, Barcenas. The latter stated that the reports in the French press were doubtless false. Señor Lequerica had certainly not denied to Bonnet Kindelan's statement (that Spain could not remain inactive if Italy were drawn into complications), nor had he referred to Aranda's alleged interview saying the contrary. In any case the Ambassador in Paris had never received such instructions from his Government as the French newspapers asserted. Judging from Lequerica's whole demeanour, which is extremely energetic and severe towards the French, I consider that this assumption is correct.

STOHRER

### No. 606

1625/389019-21

#### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 227 of July 3

LONDON, July 3, 1939—2:28 p.m.

Received July 3—5:30 p.m.

Pol. II 2372.

With reference to my telegram No. 224 of June 30.<sup>1</sup>

1) The tendency of certain circles, stressed in the telegram under reference, to rouse public opinion here and produce a war psychosis by spreading false reports from Danzig, has become considerably more marked during the last few days. The press and political circles here are influenced by the prevailing anxiety lest a *coup* by Germany against Danzig is impending and would bring into play the British guarantee to Poland and make war inevitable.

2) The technique of this campaign of incitement is as follows: For several days now circumstantial reports from Danzig have been circulated, mostly via Warsaw correspondents of American papers, on Danzig making military preparations with German help: construction of barracks, formation of Danzig Free Corps, siting of artillery, imports of war material from East Prussia. With this, are being connected rumoured reports of an imminent *coup*.

3) The wire-pullers of this press campaign seem to be the following: Leaders and instigators are Jewish-American quarters, who cause tendentious reports on the situation in Danzig to be spread through the United Press from Warsaw. The more moderate Reuter reports appear only some hours later, so that they can have no effect. The

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 593.

United Press messages from Warsaw are seized upon by interested circles and exploited.

4) According to available information, it is in the first place the Americans who are interested, inasmuch as Roosevelt and his Jewish advisers, anxious for the Neutrality Bill to be passed,<sup>2</sup> need an atmosphere of war in Europe for their purposes.<sup>3</sup>

5) In France the circles who participate in creating a war atmosphere in Britain, are those who blame Britain for making too few concessions in the Soviet Pact negotiations.

6) Specially interested quarters here are those looking for the where-withal to oppose the Cabinet, and desirous of thwarting any beginnings of a constructive policy towards Germany. In particular there are the Anglo-Jewish circles and, in their wake, the Churchill group, which has been further strengthened by the Cliveden Set (Lord Astor). This tendency in domestic policy is evident from the demand voiced in various newspapers (e.g. *The Observer*) for Churchill to be brought into the Cabinet.

For circles close [*sic* ? to them] (Hore-Belisha), who sponsor stronger armaments and/or a wider call-up, this campaign of incitement is also very convenient.

Naturally the Polish Embassy is making every effort to publicize the Warsaw reports as widely as possible, and to close the gap in the British guarantee.

7) As a new and propagandistically effective line, statements are being made that Germany is less concerned for Danzig's return to the Reich than in using Danzig propaganda to undermine and then destroy Poland's independence, just as Czecho-Slovakia was destroyed from within by the slogan of self-determination for the Sudeten Germans.

8) Official circles are readily listening to alarming reports from Warsaw; for they point out that the *Anschluss* with Austria and last summer's Czech crisis were also ushered in by reports on the formation of Free Corps and military preparations, reports which in each case subsequently proved correct; similar reports are said to have been received from Danzig.

9) The present mood here is one of great excitement, coupled with the determination to look upon any changes in Danzig—whether from without or from within—as a compelling reason for Britain to support any military measures Poland may take. Danzig counts at present as a point of prestige, to be a touchstone of Britain's political standing and fidelity to treaties.

<sup>2</sup> The Bill had been passed by the House of Representatives, but with certain restrictive amendments, on June 30, 1939; see document No. 650.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 181 of July 4 to Washington (not printed, 1625/389023) Weizsäcker, acting on a suggestion made by Dieckhoff in a minute of the same day (not printed, 7891/E571433), summarized paragraphs 1 to 4 of the document here printed and requested the Embassy to expose the press campaign as a pack of lies.

The efforts described in my report A 24106 [sic] of June 24<sup>4</sup> to find a constructive policy towards Germany have accordingly receded into the background, but are still continuing.

DIRKSEN

<sup>4</sup> This seems to be a reference to report No. A 2492, document No. 564.

## No. 607

103/111406-09

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Moscow, July 3, 1939—8:40 p.m.

No. 121 of July 3

Received July 4—1:20 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 139 of July 2.<sup>1</sup>

As instructed, I expand my telegram No. 115 of June 28<sup>2</sup> as follows:

Molotov received me in the Kremlin three hours after I had asked for an interview. A correct translation was ensured through Hilger. Molotov's translator was a failure.

I opened the discussion with the statement that on the basis of the talks in Berlin, particularly with the Foreign Minister, I had the impression that we would welcome a normalization of relations with the Soviet Union. The State Secretary had very clearly acquainted M. Astakhov with our attitude.<sup>3</sup> The following were indicative of this attitude:

The correct tone of the German press towards the Soviet Union, the conclusion of Non-Aggression Pacts with the Baltic States,<sup>4</sup> and our desire for the resumption of economic negotiations.

Molotov listened with interest, and stated that he took note of my communication with satisfaction. I continued that since the conversation of the State Secretary with Astakhov, we had waited for a Soviet statement as to what Molotov had meant in his conversation with me on May 20<sup>5</sup> by the words "construction of a political basis for the resumption of economic negotiations". I must also point out to him that the attitude of the Soviet press in all questions concerning Germany still gave cause for serious objections.

M. Astakhov had been told<sup>6</sup> that M. Molotov wished to answer me

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (695/260385). In this telegram, Schmidt transmitted the Foreign Minister's urgent request for further details of Schulenburg's last conversation with Molotov, including, if possible, a verbatim report.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 579.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 451.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 664.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 424.

<sup>6</sup> The Moscow draft (695/260380-84) here reads: "M. Astakhov had told me"; see document No. 540.

personally. Among other things I had come to enquire whether he had anything to tell me.

In his answer, Molotov did not go into the question as to the meaning of the term "political basis" but he declared that the Soviet Government, in accordance with the public statements of their leaders, desired good relations with all countries and therefore—provided there was reciprocity—would also welcome a normalization of relations with Germany. It was not the fault of the Soviet Government if these relations had become bad. He could not accept the charge against the Soviet press, since he was not aware of any hostile attitude of the press towards Germany.

I replied that much could be said about these questions; that I had not, however, come to talk of the past, but of the future.

Thereupon Molotov asked how we visualized further developments and what changes had occurred recently in the relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. As to the Non-Aggression Pacts, Germany had concluded them in the first place in her own interest, and they concerned only Germany and the countries participating, but not the Soviet Union. Moreover, judging by Poland's experiences, he must doubt the permanence of such treaties.

I replied that our Non-Aggression Pacts provided the Baltic States with additional security, in which the Soviet Union was very much interested. Poland had herself brought about the termination of the treaty with us by behaving irresponsibly and by joining a combination of Powers hostile to us, which was incompatible with friendly relations with us. To this Molotov stated that in his opinion the treaty concluded by Poland with Britain<sup>7</sup> was a purely defensive instrument.

I contradicted this, and pointed out that the word "defensive" in this connection was of only academic significance. Then I returned to Molotov's question as to how we visualized further developments and said that, in my opinion, the main task in the future would be that both countries should avoid everything that would lead to a further deterioration of relations and do everything that might result in their improvement. Germany harboured no evil intentions against the Soviet Union; one of the proofs of that was the Treaty of Berlin, which we had extended.<sup>8</sup>

Thereupon Molotov asked: "Are you convinced that the Berlin Treaty really is still in force and has not been superseded by later treaties concluded by Germany?" I replied: "I know of no such treaties and have no reason to doubt the validity of the Treaty of Berlin."

<sup>7</sup> Evidently a reference to the Anglo-Polish Declaration of Apr. 6, 1939. See document No. 169, footnote 5.

<sup>8</sup> Of Apr. 24, 1926; see document No. 490.

Finally I asked Molotov what he had to say to the question of the resumption of economic negotiations.

Molotov replied that he knew what had been said in the last conversation between Mikoyan and Hilger.<sup>9</sup> He approved Mikoyan's . . . (group missing)<sup>10</sup> and suggested that we give Mikoyan the information required.

I sought to convince Molotov that it would not be in the interests of speeding up the economic negotiations if details were discussed between Mikoyan and Hilger or myself as we had continuously to refer back to Berlin. Schnurre, on the other hand, had all the necessary authority, knowledge and experience and would be able speedily to conclude the negotiations to our mutual satisfaction.

Thereupon Molotov indicated that the fact that Schnurre's journey in February had failed to materialize had displeased the Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup> It should be left to Mikoyan, who was well versed in the subject, to ask for what he considered right. When we had given the information desired by Mikoyan, a visit by Schnurre to Moscow might perhaps prove useful.

The conversation closed in a friendly spirit with my repeated request that Molotov influence the attitude of the Soviet press.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 568.

<sup>10</sup> The Moscow draft here reads: "attitude".

<sup>11</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 485, 486, 487, 489 and 492.

## No. 608

1025/389034-35

### *The Minister in Latvia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 81 of July 3

RIGA, July 3, 1939—8:46 p.m.

Received July 4—12:5 a.m.

Pol. II 2387.

With reference to your telegram No. 103 of June 30.<sup>1</sup>

Munters told me the following: The Russians had made the last official communication to his Minister in Moscow at about the time of Strang's arrival,<sup>2</sup> and had on that occasion declared the guarantee of the neutrality of the border States to be desirable. So far, the Russians had not put this into the form of a firm proposal, but had confined themselves to criticizing the Anglo-French proposals. Molotov had promised to address an enquiry to Latvia before concluding a final agreement. This had not yet been done.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 589.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., in Moscow on June 14.



The British had communicated their first proposal here in writing.<sup>3</sup> In it the rendering of assistance was made dependent on a request from the Baltic States, as victims of unprovoked aggression. He knew that, up to the time of the discussion on June 21,<sup>4</sup> the British view had remained unchanged. Since then, after an interval of 10 days, there was a fresh discussion on July 1,<sup>5</sup> during which amended British proposals were presented, the contents of which he did not yet know. It was rumoured that therein mutual assistance by Britain, France and Russia was agreed in the event of an attack on one of their number or on one of their neighbouring States. The [Latvian] attitude to this would have to be reserved until exact details of the proposal became known, and might also be influenced by consultation with other neutrals concerned. The reason the negotiations dragged on was, as far as he knew, partly disagreement over the inclusion of the Far East, and partly the Russian desire to have the Baltic States guaranteed by Britain and France only, while Russia would merely undertake to go to the assistance of the *guarantor* Powers. This had been rejected by Britain.<sup>6</sup> Munters thinks that Britain is pursuing the whole project with no great vigour, and is trying to impress the "aggressor States" with a rather vague agreement, but to commit herself as little as possible. He thinks it probable that there will be a temporary break off of the discussions if the new British proposals do not meet with Russian approval. He says that such an outcome would be the most desirable for Latvia.

I spoke in accordance with the second part of telegram No. 103. Munters replied that an Anglo-Russian guarantee of Latvia or a guarantee by either of those States would be definitely and unequivocally rejected. But a proposal to guarantee Latvian neutrality would be met by the Latvian Government making Germany's participation a condition, and adding that a guarantee of neutrality by individual Powers was a contradiction in terms. He felt that Latvia's situation was like that of the Netherlands and he referred to the Netherlands' sharp attitude to inclusion.<sup>7</sup> I referred to the *Bri...* (second syllable corrupt) [hva] *Seme* article, sent with report A. 1016 of July 3,<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. v, No. 635.

<sup>4</sup> See also *ibid.*, vol. vi, No. 119.

<sup>5</sup> See also *ibid.*, vol. vi, Nos. 206 and 207.

<sup>6</sup> The text of the telegram here printed up to this point, together with the substance of the next paragraph, was repeated for information to the Legations at Tallinn and Helsinki in telegrams Nos. 78 and 113 respectively (not printed, 1625/389038-40).

<sup>7</sup> On July 3, the Netherlands Government had issued an official announcement stating that they had not been consulted over the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations and reaffirming "the traditional Netherlands standpoint to remain aloof from the rivalries which at present exist in Europe". In telegram No. 40 of July 4 (not printed, 1625/389043) and in a report of the same date (not printed, 2333/486634-35) the German Minister at The Hague reported that concern had been expressed in the Netherlands Foreign Ministry and in the Dutch press over the negotiations in Moscow possibly including the Netherlands in a guarantee.

<sup>8</sup> Not printed (8044/E578352-54).

according to which Latvia also gave Britain and France an unequivocal refusal.

In conclusion, Munters asked whether I could state Germany's attitude to a general guarantee—on the Belgian pattern<sup>9</sup>—of Latvia's neutrality. I replied in the negative, indicating that Germany, content with the recently achieved system of agreements, expected a favourable development of good-neighbourly relations and therefore saw no need for alterations in the existing treaty relationships.<sup>10</sup>

KOTZE

<sup>9</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 475.

<sup>10</sup> In a despatch of July 14 (not printed, 1625/389041-42) Weizsäcker gave instructions that, should Munters return to this question, he should be told that in the German view the solution suggested by him was impossible of realization in the prevailing political situation in Europe.

## No. 609

3039/600596

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 206 of July 3

BELGRADE, July 3, 1939—9:45 p.m.

Received July 4—1:20 a.m.

Pol. IV 3966.

With reference to your telegram No. 174 of July 1.<sup>1</sup>

I took advantage of the views expressed in yesterday's *Politika*,<sup>2</sup> as reported by DNB, on Article 6 of the Turco-French Pact,<sup>3</sup> where a sharp distinction is drawn between the policy of neutrality of the Balkan Entente and Turkey's new line in foreign policy, to call on the Foreign Minister today and have confirmed to me that these views represented those of the Government. Cincar-Marković said that this was so, adding that *Politika's* views, inspired by him, should already have been published immediately after the conclusion of the Franco-Turkish pact, but that, owing to a regrettable oversight by the Press Bureau, they had not been used. Meanwhile, in other Yugoslav newspapers comments had not yet [*sic* ? however] been published which could have been regarded as approval by Yugoslavia of Turkey's foreign policy. This error had now been set right by the semi-official comments in *Politika*.

The Foreign Minister then of his own accord and by reference to Turkey's interests, which were divergent from the interests of the Balkan States, came to speak of his desire to buttress Yugoslavia's

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 598.

<sup>2</sup> A German text of this article was forwarded to Berlin by the German Legation at Belgrade with a despatch of July 4 (not printed, 8516/E597411-12).

<sup>3</sup> The Franco-Turkish Declaration of June 23; see Editors' Note on p. 777.

policy of neutrality by a *rapprochement* with similarly orientated neighbouring States. He mentioned Hungary, Bulgaria, Rumania, and Greece in this connection. He said that he was aware of the difficulties of realizing this plan, but thought that such a *rapprochement* would be of advantage, not only to Yugoslavia, but also to Germany, who would then be facing a solid bloc of States, really neutral and open to her economically. Should the plan fail, Yugoslavia would continue alone along the course of foreign policy she had hitherto followed. In no circumstances would she allow herself to be drawn into any anti-German combinations. When I asked whether any political importance attached to the forthcoming visit of the Egyptian Foreign Minister on July 7,<sup>4</sup> Cincar-Marković categorically denied this. Yugoslavia had nothing political to negotiate with Egypt, he said. He would only be discussing a few economic matters.

HEEREN

<sup>4</sup> The Egyptian Foreign Minister was on a tour of visits to Ankara, Bucharest, Sofia, Belgrade and Athens.

## No. 610

8422/E592922

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 120 of July 3

Moscow, July 3, 1939.

With reference to your telegram No. 127 of June 19.<sup>1</sup>

Potemkin has now informed me that the Soviet Government are prepared to meet our wishes and to release, in return for seven *Komsomol* sailors,<sup>2</sup> Captain Soloviev and two civilian prisoners in Spain, seven German nationals, of whom five have already been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment. Report being sent by today's courier.<sup>3</sup>

This Soviet communication is the first sign of any accommodating disposition to speak of for a long time.<sup>4</sup>

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8422/E592923). In this telegram Woermann stated that objections would no longer be raised to the release of Soloviev.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 293. In telegram No. 91 of May 17 (not printed, 2801/548242) Woermann had instructed the Embassy at Moscow to open negotiations for an exchange of prisoners, since the Italians had definitely abandoned all claim to the *Komsomol* sailors and Soloviev, captain of the Soviet ship, *Zurup*.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2801/548243-47).

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 148 of July 13 (not printed, 8422/E592930-31) Woermann instructed Schulenburg to communicate German agreement to Potemkin's proposal. In a memorandum of Sept. 5 (not printed, 8422/E592929) Schwinner, of the Moscow Embassy, recorded that the *Komsomol* sailors had been released and had reached Genoa on Sept. 1. Fuller material on this episode has been filmed on Serials 2130, 2801, 7992 and 8422.

## No. 611

2002/442320-21

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 533

BERLIN, July 3, 1939.

e.o. Pol. IV 3982.

The Slovak Minister today, referring to the present negotiations by a German Military Delegation at Bratislava,<sup>1</sup> again raised objections with me about:

- 1) the transfer of German garrisons to the Váh Valley, and
- 2) the exclusion of Slovak troops from the territory of West Slovakia occupied by German garrisons.

Whilst on this subject the Minister made general statements about the continuation of the Beneš agitation, which was particularly effective among the very large number of American Slovaks. We would be supplying material for this propaganda if our military demands were not kept within the scope of the Treaty of Protection.<sup>2</sup> After all, our policy in Slovakia set an example for the whole of South East Europe. Tiso's undoubtedly pro-German policy would be shaken if it were not supported. In case of emergency, Slovakia would of course be completely at the disposal of our armed forces, but in peacetime one ought to remain within the scope of the terms of the Treaty. On the conduct of individual members of our forces too, the Minister let fall some words of cautious criticism.

I replied to the Minister that there could be no doubt of our friendly policy towards Slovakia. As was known, we gave Slovakia every facility for social and economic life and for maintaining her independence as a State. This must be recognized in Slovakia (and it was also not contested by the Minister). It would therefore only be a matter of the special concrete requests which had been brought up; these were the subject of negotiations at Bratislava; fresh instructions were on the way there.<sup>3</sup> I could not, however, admit that the Minister's statements and his reference to the verbal agreements of March and to the text of the Treaty would lead me to adopt a different view from that taken by our negotiators at Bratislava. Nor did I in the least

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 554.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 40.

<sup>3</sup> Instructions for the negotiations at Bratislava were agreed upon at a conference on July 10 by the Foreign Ministry in consultation with the OKW and the Ministries of Justice, Finance and Economics, to whom the minutes of this conference (not printed, 350/202159-65) were circulated on July 11 with the request to submit any additions and suggestions, so that final instructions might be sent to Bratislava. A copy of these minutes was also sent to Bratislava, as emerges from the Foreign Ministry's letter R 1097 g of July 17 (not printed, 350/202148-58), which supplemented the instructions in the minutes, and with which a draft treaty was enclosed. The Treaty on the Zone of Protection was finally signed on August 12, see Editors' Note in vol. VII of this Series.



in consequence." End of telegram from Moscow. Addition for (1) and (2):<sup>4</sup>

Please inform the Government to which you are accredited that our approval of the amendments to the Aalands Convention naturally applies only to the text submitted to us. We expect that the Soviet Russian demand will be flatly rejected and that we shall be kept currently informed on the matter.<sup>5</sup>

WOERMANN<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In the draft of this telegram the final paragraph read as follows: "Through the Russian claims for participation in the defence of the Aaland Islands a new situation has arisen. Please inform the Government to which you are accredited that in the case of the acceptance of the Russian demand our consent to the amendment of the Aalands Convention would have to be rescinded." This version was amended in Woermann's hand to read as printed above.

<sup>5</sup> For the reply from Helsinki see document No. 626. In despatch No. A 1280 of July 5 from Stockholm (not printed, 2943/570171) Wied reported that he had, as instructed, represented the German views to the Swedish Foreign Minister who had assured him that he would continue to keep him informed.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "Before despatch, to Pol. II for counter-signature in view of Anglo-Franco-Soviet pact negotiations."

## No. 613

108/111470.

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 123 of July 4

Moscow, July 4, 1939—8:20 p.m.

Received July 4—9:00 p.m.

My Italian colleague saw Potemkin today and gave me the following information about the interview:<sup>1</sup> On the Anglo-Soviet negotiations, Potemkin had said that there were still some points to be settled and referred to Soviet conditions laid down in Molotov's speech.<sup>2</sup> The Italian Ambassador had the impression that Potemkin regarded the negotiations more optimistically than at their last interview three weeks ago.

After the Italian Ambassador had touched on German-Soviet negotiations and stated that, according to his information,<sup>3</sup> the German Government earnestly desired to normalize relations, Potemkin stated that an agreement between the Soviet Union and Germany would be the most effective guarantee of peace.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 451.

<sup>2</sup> On May 31; see document No. 463.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 569 and *D.D.I.*, loc. cit., No. 386.

## No. 614

276/178363-65

*Herr Rudolf Nadolny<sup>1</sup> to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BRIESEN, July 4, 1939.

Received July 14.

DEAR SCHULENBURG: After our last conversation<sup>2</sup> I at once procured the Treaty of Berlin<sup>3</sup> and discussed the question of its present validity at the Ministry. There is no doubt about its formal validity. The Treaty was extended for an indefinite period in 1933 and remains in force until its denunciation. Whether in consequence of the estrangement which has occurred meantime it is to be regarded as invalidated depends on the will of the parties.

Taking the case that it is recognized by both sides as still valid, the question arises whether it can render an Anglo-Russian mutual assistance agreement ineffective.

Nothing can be deduced from Article 2, which deals with neutrality in cases of war. For it prescribes neutrality only in the event of the other party being attacked in spite of peaceful behaviour. It would be difficult, today, to deduce from this either a Russian duty or right to remain neutral on the outbreak of the impending conflict.

The article is undoubtedly not well drafted. Its wording can only be explained by the conditions prevailing at the time, when each party wanted to protect itself against the Western Powers and to prevent the other from making common cause with them. I suggested an amendment at the time, but Berlin did not want it. That neutrality has not been provided for in all cases not concerning the other party, and that whether to remain neutral or not depends in the last resort on that party's verdict on the question of what constitutes peaceful conduct and aggression, is wrong. In my view the article should run somewhat as follows:

"In the event of conflicts between one of the contracting parties and a third Power, the other party will observe neutrality. If, in the opinion of this other party, its own interests are also affected by the conflict, it shall consult with the first party in accordance with Article 1."

The position is more favourable for frustrating Britain's efforts when Article 1 is examined. This prescribes friendly consultation for the purpose of reaching agreement on all questions jointly affecting the two countries. That the Polish question is one of these can hardly

<sup>1</sup> German Ambassador in the Soviet Union, November 1933-June 1934.

<sup>2</sup> No record has been found; it presumably occurred during Schulenburg's visit to Berlin, June 12-24; see document No. 499, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 490.

be doubted. Formerly it certainly was always regarded as a joint question, and even as the most important one.

You expressed the view that a non-aggression pact should also be concluded with the Russians. I wonder whether this is still necessary in view of Article 1? This Article should in itself suffice to cover all cases of conflict, and tactically it is perhaps even better to rely on the already existing agreement than to ask for a fresh one and thereby to admit that no binding obligation exists. In the last instance, in the event of an economic agreement being reached, reference could be made to Article 1 in the preamble, stressing that it is universally applicable to *all* questions jointly affecting both countries.

If the Berlin Treaty is still in force, the Soviet Government can certainly conclude as many alliances as they wish. They cannot, however, go to war against us, but must rather enter into consultation with us for a friendly understanding, if, in their opinion, the point at issue requires discussion between us. If they act otherwise or make an agreement which excludes such an understanding with us, that would mean a breach of the Treaty. Do the Russians want this?

This, therefore, demands our main attention, rather than their reaching an agreement with Britain. Here I think the following should also be taken into consideration regarding the Russian attitude. The Russians desire, as I take it, peace and security for themselves—at least in Europe. And they fear us most. Their joining the British coalition of Powers, if it ever came to this, would be above all owing to this fear and not because they wanted war with us or were interested in Poland remaining undiminished. As far as Poland is concerned, they would probably even prefer it if we forced through some of our claims, because this would in their view perpetuate the antagonism between Poland and ourselves, and prevent a German-Polish cooperation which might also go against them. A war would perhaps not be unwelcome to them, but they themselves would rather keep out of it. Therefore a coalition with Britain safeguarding them against all eventualities and simultaneously a means of avoiding any military consequences of this, would perhaps please them best.

Well, the means would be supplied by Article 1 of the Berlin Treaty. It would only be a matter of wanting to apply it, i.e., of regarding the Treaty as still in force, and not invalidating the article by an explicit clause in the agreement with Britain. For the rest we need not mind the Soviets complying with Britain's wishes about the pact.

It seems to me, my dear Schulenburg, that your task is to feel your way towards this result. It is a difficult one, perhaps even unattainable. But it is worthy of "the sweat of noble brows".

There still remains the obstacle of the Anti-Comintern Pact. Should it really be insurmountable, if there is agreement on the main question? The Comintern is not the Soviet Government. Why should it always



only be the Russians who play such a trump card, when it suits their hand, and why shouldn't we for once? As to the Japanese, they can raise no objection if we make no new political agreement with the Soviets for the time being but just keep to the old one. Moreover, the Far Eastern matters, which concern them, are not under discussion.

There is no more than I can say on the subject at present, and perhaps even what I have said is superfluous or already out-of-date. Perhaps, however, it will at least give you food for thought in one direction or another. It is needless to say that I should be glad if the economic negotiations got under way. Then perhaps I could also get on with my arbitration court case! At present I do not quite know how I can make any progress with it. And you know how anxious I am to carry it out.

With best wishes,

Your old friend,

NADOLNY

### No. 615

5570/E398924

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 207 of July 5

BELGRADE, July 5, 1939—3:35 p.m.

Received July 5—5:35 p.m.

W 1038 g.

With reference to your telegram No. 176 of July 3.<sup>1</sup>

The Protocol on the arms credit was signed today by myself and the Yugoslav Finance Minister empowered to do so by the Council of Ministers.

I had previously ascertained that also in Consul General Neuhausen's opinion the matter of the oil concession was so far in order as to enable simultaneous signature on behalf of the Reich to be dispensed with, especially as the fact that the amount of the credit is left open in the Protocol affords us good possibilities of exerting pressure.

Signed copy of the Protocol<sup>2</sup> follows with a despatch.<sup>3</sup>

HEEREN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5570/E398915). In this telegram Weizsäcker requested signature of the Protocol as soon as possible. See also documents Nos. 573 and 586.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 620.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5570/E398948).

## No. 616

2767/535916-17

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 201 of July 5

TARABYA, July 5, 1939—5:40 p.m.

Received July 5—11:20 p.m.

Pol. II 2406.

I went by air yesterday to Ankara to hear from Numan, as arranged,<sup>1</sup> about the development of the Anglo-Turkish negotiations. Numan said that the political treaty had been settled along the lines already communicated to me<sup>2</sup> and was to be signed in about ten days. In the Mediterranean, Turkey would automatically take part in any conflict on Britain's side, but Turkey's Balkan sphere of interest would be treated quite independently of obligations under the Balkan Pact. The surmise which I put to him, that at Britain's request Turkey would guarantee Rumania's frontiers—which Germany would have to regard as an unfriendly act—was, he said, without foundation. Turkey was only concerned with the security of her own frontiers, and earnestly wished to avoid doing anything which might injure Berlin. Turkey did not guarantee any frontiers, but it was clear that if Rumania were attacked, that is if her existence were threatened, and if she were supported by Britain, the Turkish treaty would also come into operation. The Hungarian Minister<sup>3</sup> told me that if an attack on Rumania by Hungary should take place, i.e., without our participation, this would not be a *casus foederis*. In the case of Yugoslavia only the obligations under the Balkan Pact came into play. When I asked whether, in the event of a Mediterranean conflict in which the Balkans remained unattacked and neutral, while Britain, as was to be expected, immediately attempted to occupy Greek ports and bases, Turkey would stand by her allies against Britain, I merely met with the embarrassed reply that the case would not arise and was not covered by any pact obligations.

A diplomatic friend asked the Foreign Minister about the relation of the Anglo-Turkish pact to the Moscow negotiations. No formal relations, he was told, existed, but during the Potemkin visit<sup>4</sup> the simultaneous conclusion of a quadripartite agreement had been under discussion. Owing to the delay over the Hatay treaty<sup>5</sup> this had proved impossible in respect of France. It had now been agreed not to wait

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 590.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 556.

<sup>3</sup> Zoltán de Máriássy.

<sup>4</sup> From Apr. 28 to May 5; see document No. 336.

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 777.

with the British pact for the result of the Moscow negotiations. The Franco-Turkish treaty would be identical with the British. The Havas report from Berlin about my alleged mission to Moscow caused the greatest sensation in Ankara.<sup>6</sup> It was presumed that I was to conclude a non-aggression pact there in order to paralyse British policy. The Party paper yesterday printed an article against it.

PAPEN

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<sup>6</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 217.

## No. 617

66/46677-86

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RAM 40

BERLIN, July 5, 1939.

#### RECORD

OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND THE BULGARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT, KIOSSEIVANOV,<sup>1</sup> IN THE REICH CHANCELLERY IN BERLIN ON JULY 5, 1939, IN THE PRESENCE OF REICH FOREIGN MINISTER VON RIBBENTROP, THE GERMAN MINISTER IN SOFIA, VON RICHTHOFEN, THE BULGARIAN MINISTER IN BERLIN, DRAGANOV, AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, MINISTER ALTINOV.

Kiosseivanov began by thanking the Führer for the extremely cordial reception which had been accorded to him in Germany, and expressed his gratification at the great honour which had fallen to him personally in having the opportunity of meeting the great statesman and creator of the New Germany.

The Führer also expressed his pleasure at being able to welcome the Minister President of a country which, in spite of the absence of close juristic treaty ties, nevertheless had the closest relations with Germany based on the historical past and natural conditions of life. Both the Bulgarian and German peoples had, at a certain point in their history, shared the same destiny and both were now interested in turning this same unhappy destiny into a better one.

Kiosseivanov agreed with the Führer that the old comradeship in arms, the community of present interests and the feelings of sympathy and friendship bound the two countries more closely together than the purely juristic formulae of treaties. A pact of friendship of unlimited duration, inscribed in the hearts of both peoples, thus united Bulgaria and Germany. Bulgaria had followed, with great admiration, the rise of the German people to their present greatness and hoped that Germany

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<sup>1</sup> Kiosseivanov paid an official visit to Berlin July 5-7, 1939. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 490.

would continue to succeed in achieving the place among the nations assigned to her by history, and that in so doing she would not forget her little allies, such as Bulgaria.

In his reply the Führer said that the present situation was characterized by the fact that there were two categories of peoples; those who, either by misfortune or by inadequate and unfortunate political leadership, had received only a limited share of the world's vital goods. For national and economic reasons therefore these peoples were interested in changing the *status quo*.

On the other hand there were peoples who, owing to their geographical position or by undeniably clever political leadership, had secured for themselves a very large share of the living space and goods of the world. These nations were endeavouring to stabilize the present *status quo* and wished to maintain it as something permanent. Germany, unfortunately, belonged to the first category of peoples and had also had to accept heavy losses after the last war. These losses also made themselves felt above all in the economic field, and the Führer quoted as an example the loss of the German colonial possessions which, before the war, had been five times as large as the German mother country. Germany was therefore forced, not only for idealistic, but for very material reasons (140 inhabitants to the square kilometre) to bring about a revision of the present state of affairs. The Führer would be happy if this revision could be brought about through the normal methods of peaceful settlement. Not only once, but many times, he had made the subject of debate every problem of interest to Germany in this respect in order to obtain a peaceful solution. But the satiated countries had not even been willing to start discussions on a peaceful settlement. As a particularly glaring example in this connection the Führer quoted the colonial question, which he had repeatedly brought up for discussion but always with a negative result. Should these methods of peaceful settlement finally fail, other means for bringing about a revision must be sought, as a solution of the problems at issue was inevitably necessary if one did not wish to jeopardize the whole future of the German people. Thus the present tension was explained by the conflicting interests of the satiated countries on the one hand and, on the other, of those countries who had not come into their own and who, furthermore, had suffered heavy losses through the war. He thought that Bulgaria too would scarcely accept for ever the state of affairs established by the Peace Treaties. Hence he drew the sober conclusion that those peoples, for whom the maintenance of present conditions would mean continued injustice and result in economic catastrophe, must stand together. They must stand together just as the satiated Powers were already now marching together. The latter did not stand for unlimited and eternal peace, but only for a certain period of peace which they needed quietly to digest the loot which had

fallen to their share. Even if Germany and Italy had not concluded a pact with each other, they would nevertheless always stand side by side as a result of this community of interests. Between Germany and Bulgaria there had already been close cooperation during the World War, the result of which, however, had been very disappointing for both countries, owing to the many mistakes made at the time. One of these mistakes, said the Führer, had been the fact that during the war he was a soldier and not Reich Chancellor. For had he been Reich Chancellor, Germany would certainly have won the war. At all events he was glad that he had been so young at that time that he was today still of the right age to take an active part himself in rectifying these mistakes. He hoped that he would succeed in this rectification without war. If, however, justice and reason were not heeded then indeed other methods must be employed to restore the natural order of existence. He still believed he could achieve his ends by peaceful means, but on the other hand he would not shrink from other means for, come what might, he must safeguard the right to live of 80 million people.

He believed that in Bulgaria too, similar ideas were cherished in the hearts of the people, even if they were perhaps not expressed.

Economically, Germany had become a factor which could no longer be overlooked in Europe. Admittedly, the great empires wanted to sell a lot; but as in their wealth they could produce everything within their own countries, they did not want to buy anything from other countries and were therefore bad trading partners. Germany, on the other hand, was a great consumer who, while wishing to sell, was also fully prepared to buy from other countries, and whose only interest was that the door should not be shut in her face by malevolent adversaries in those markets which were still freely accessible.

Moreover even the most careful scrutiny would reveal no problem standing between Germany and Bulgaria. Politically Germany was disinterested and her sole desire was that Bulgaria should succeed in changing her lot and at the same time be a good trading partner for Germany.

Kiosseivanov corroborated the Führer's view that Bulgaria would not accept indefinitely the injustices of the Peace Treaties. Only, Bulgaria was weak, and, in consequence of her geographical position, surrounded by neighbours who had all annexed Bulgarian territory. The Balkan Pact was an instrument directed against Bulgaria, to perpetuate the frontiers forced upon her. Bulgaria had tried by peaceful means to right the injustices of the Peace Treaties. The satiated countries had, however, made no concessions whatever. Without force or the threat of force nothing could be achieved.

Kiosseivanov thanked the Führer for the help which Germany had always given to Bulgaria, especially in the economic field, and which

was reflected in the fact that 80 per cent of Bulgaria's production (almost the whole of Bulgaria's foreign trade) went to Germany. In the field of armaments too, Germany had given gratifying help. Bulgaria wanted to strengthen her armaments, so that she might be able not only to defend her own interests, but also to be in a position to stand by her friends before the whole world. Therefore he (Kiosseivanov) requested a speeding up of German armaments so that Bulgaria might be protected against any attempts by her neighbours to attack her. Although no treaty agreements of a political nature existed with Germany, the neighbouring countries knew that Bulgaria was Germany's natural ally and in case of conflict they would fall upon her as quickly as possible before Germany could render effective aid. This explained the need for rearmament. Bulgaria could particularly do with machine guns. In this respect German delivery dates were somewhat long, and he asked if perhaps 1,000-2,000 machine guns could be lent to Bulgaria from German stocks until those ordered from Germany were delivered.<sup>2</sup>

The Führer expressed his readiness to have the question of a possible speeding up of production studied and pointed out that he had for the most part stopped supplies to certain States, such as Turkey and Rumania, whose policy was not clear, except in cases where war material had actually been already delivered or where very high penalties would be due for breach of contracts. In all other cases supplies had been completely stopped, and Germany would make every effort to further Bulgaria's rearmament, as it was not in Germany's interests that Bulgaria should be a kind of no-man's land. He knew all about the situation and was well able to appreciate the qualities of the Bulgarian soldier.

Then Kiosseivanov, to explain his previously submitted request, drew attention to the disquiet which had arisen in the Bulgarian Ministry of War when a Turco-Rumanian agreement became known under which Turkey would immediately place fifteen divisions at Rumania's disposal should Bulgaria try to occupy the Dardanelles by force. Moreover, in the event of a conflict, Turkey and Rumania would occupy Bulgaria forthwith in order to make her a battlefield for any possible clashes. In order to call a halt to such attempts, Bulgaria needed the arms she had asked for, and was also, with all speed, carrying out fortifications on the Turco-Bulgarian frontier. The reports received by Bulgaria were partly corroborated by the fact that eight Turkish divisions were holding manoeuvres close to the Bulgarian frontier. As this was a completely unprecedented event, Bulgaria had asked Turkey for an explanation and had received the answer that these manoeuvres were being carried out, not because of Turkey's distrust of Bulgaria,

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<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 480.

but to stem a thrust which another Power might make through Bulgarian territory towards the Dardanelles.

The Führer replied that in these circumstances two things were necessary: firstly, strengthening and arming the Bulgarian Army to the utmost limit of readiness to strike. In this connection he pointed out that in another case, namely in Spain, Germany had shown her readiness to help, and that without demanding any return in the form of colonies or the like, as had been alleged by the British and French. Secondly, joint deliberations should be held between those agencies whose direct cooperation with each other would be required in an emergency. He did not mean to suggest official General Staff talks as these would cause too much of a stir, but rather consultations between the competent German and Bulgarian agencies in order to establish what Bulgaria herself intended to do in the event of a conflict, what material she could deploy and what kind of aid she expected from outside.

These consultations could take place through the German Legation in Sofia or, as the Führer later added, on the occasion of an official or unofficial visit by the King of Bulgaria, who would then have to be accompanied by some experts, so that the points in question could be discussed in personal conversation with the Führer.

The Führer voiced his doubts as to whether Rumania had aggressive intentions, since the Rumanian Army was in very poor condition. As regards the defence against Turkey, Italy would naturally have to be brought in. Bulgaria's possible war aims must be clearly defined so that Bulgaria would not again be deprived of the fruits of her victory as she had previously been in the second Balkan War. Germany was interested in Bulgaria getting her due. Turkey had suddenly changed her policy. This could not be attributed to Germany who, for many years, had supported Turkey in every way, particularly in the economic sphere, including war economy and by credits. Turkey's policy was completely incomprehensible and could only be explained by the British pound and the French franc perhaps playing too great a part with certain Turkish persons. But now that Turkey had started on this new policy Germany was interested that not only Turkey, but also a friendly Power, should make its influence felt at one of the most important Straits, and if Bulgarian expansion resulted in the control of the Straits no longer resting exclusively with Turkey, Germany would welcome such a development most warmly. Germany herself had no territorial interests to safeguard in this region. She desired merely to trade and that on the natural basis of barter between countries with economies complementing each other. Barter was not based on a cunningly worked out credit system but only on the mutual obligation, on the one hand to supply manufactured goods and, on the other, raw materials and food.

In conclusion the Führer summed up once again the points to be dealt with in the above-mentioned consultations as follows: 1) In what way is Bulgaria threatened and what reports has she received in this respect? 2) What armaments does Bulgaria require? 3) What tactics will Bulgaria adopt for her defence and what support does she expect from outside? 4) What aims would Bulgaria pursue in the event of war? Italy would naturally have to be a partner in these consultations. The Führer again promised his full support with regard to the supply of war materials.

Expressing his thanks once more, Kiosseivanov took leave after approximately one hour's conversation.

Submitted herewith to the Reich Foreign Minister according to instructions.

SCHMIDT

### No. 618

66/46066-76

#### *Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

RAM 39

BERLIN, July 6, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

#### RECORD

OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER VON RIBBENTROP AND THE BULGARIAN MINISTER PRESIDENT, KIOSSEIVANOV, IN THE PRESENCE OF STATE SECRETARY VON WEIZSÄCKER, MINISTER RICHTHOFEN, THE BULGARIAN MINISTER, DRAGANOV, AND MINISTER ALTINOV, JULY 5, 1939.

Following on the Führer's statements of principles<sup>2</sup> Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop opened the conversation with a general review of the political situation, as seen from the German point of view, in contrast to that of certain foreign propaganda. Conscious of her strength, Germany was calm and confident. It had been her experience that it had so far not been possible to solve the problems by negotiation and according to Kiosseivanov's remarks, Bulgaria had also experienced the same. Since January 1933 the Führer had therefore seen his mission in restoring Germany's might and strength, since this was the only way to bring about a revision of the intolerable peace terms. It should, however, be observed on this, that every point on which revision had been achieved as a result of action by the Führer had previously been brought up for discussion through diplomatic channels. As he had conveyed and transmitted the Führer's offers, the Foreign Minister could speak from his own experience and say that in following

<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 617.



the policy of *rapprochement* with Great Britain which he had been pursuing for the past five years the Führer had submitted proposals to her as follows:

- 1) Stabilization of the ratio between the fleets at 100:35;
- 2) To give security to the Netherlands, Belgium and France by a permanent treaty;
- 3) A firm alliance between Britain and Germany, by which Britain was merely to give Germany a free hand in the East and that particularly for settling the Austrian and Czecho-Slovak questions. Furthermore, the Führer had stated his willingness at any time to place the German Fleet in its entirety, as well as twelve divisions, at the disposal of Britain for the defence of the British Empire at points where it was threatened. Britain, however, would not have anything to do with any of this.

Moreover in 1933 the Führer had proposed an extremely modest armaments programme. The reaction of the other side to these German endeavours was characterized by a speech made by Sir John Simon at Geneva in 1933,<sup>3</sup> in which he demanded from Germany that she should not arm at all for the next four years and should pass through a probationary period of a further four years to give the other Powers the opportunity of finding out whether Germany's political mentality would permit of their consent to her rearmament.

When the Führer realized that it was futile to continue on this path, he had proceeded to rearm Germany, and indeed so thoroughly that Germany was considerably stronger today than ever before in her history, and very much stronger than in 1914. Apart from Germany's material strength in armaments, the morale of her people had also grown stronger. Though, time and again, tendentious reports about discontent among the German people were put out, every plebiscite and election showed that 99 per cent of the German nation stood behind its Führer.

Thus the picture presented by Germany today was that of an enormously strong and energetic country, whose power was based on the homogeneity of its people, on its ideological solidarity, and its tremendous material armaments.

On the world situation and in particular on the situation in Europe the Foreign Minister observed that, with her 80 million inhabitants, Germany was the greatest military Power in Europe and that she was allied to Italy for life and death. This alliance was based not only on the ideological affinity of the two systems of Government, but also on the close community of interests existing between the two countries.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is presumably to the speech made at the League of Nations Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments on Oct. 14, 1933. For the text of this speech see British White Paper: Miscellaneous No. 5 (1933), Cmd. 4437, *Proceedings of the Bureau of the Disarmament Conference* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1933).

Thus a bloc of 125-130 million had come into being led by the two great statesmen, the Duce and the Führer. This bloc was on terms of very close friendship with Hungary and Spain. Germany's relations with Bulgaria were of the best and she hoped to make them closer still. This great bloc was not founded on paper formulae, or juristic clauses, but had emerged from the sober fact that the nations who had not received their full share had joined together. Foreign countries were trying to cause cracks to appear in this bloc and to create disunity. The Foreign Minister described these attempts as childish.

Germany had a sincere friendship with Japan. If there were war today, Japan would fight on Germany's side.

Russia was not strong but handicapped in many ways. There was no need to define Germany's attitude to Bolshevism. Bulgaria did not like Bolshevism either. It was an open question whether a distinction must not perhaps be made between Russia and Bolshevism. Moreover changes were taking place within Bolshevism, the significance and repercussions of which could not yet be assessed. One thing was certain: Bolshevism would never be allowed into Germany. As he had said, Russia was not strong and therefore had no interest in becoming involved in a European conflict. She was preoccupied at home in the carrying out of a big reconstruction programme; and her army, which, one had to admit, had a certain defensive power, would never fight outside Russian territory. Germany might achieve a normalization of relations with a Russia who did not insist on importing Bolshevism into Germany. There were no insurmountable obstacles to this. Whether this normalization would be possible was a different question. He, the Foreign Minister, hoped, however, that it would be possible, for there was no actual clash of interests between Russia and Germany. The Führer was not a Napoleon in quest of a Moscow adventure. To prove this attitude to Russia, the Foreign Minister referred to the position Germany had taken in the Ukraine question. If Germany had had designs on the Ukraine, she would not have left the Carpatho-Ukraine to Hungary. Moreover, the Foreign Minister mentioned the Non-Aggression Pacts concluded with the Baltic States<sup>4</sup> as a further proof of Germany's dispassionate attitude to Russia. He hoped to be able to establish normal relations with Russia, but here he emphasized that this had nothing to do with Germany's relations with Japan which formed one of the pillars of German foreign policy. Russia, as well as Japan, was aware of this and it might perhaps even be possible for the two countries to reach a settlement. In any case Russia was not an important factor in the European play of powers.

The position of Poland could be described in a few words. She was intoxicated with an obsession of megalomania whereas Germany's

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<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 864.

policy was persistently calm. For example, although Poland had been mobilized for months, Germany, for her part, had not mobilized and, in any case, regarded the Polish problem as of secondary importance. Should Poland come out of her madness which incidentally was being greatly aggravated by Britain, a settlement could perhaps be found. If, however, Poland committed acts of provocation she would be crushed in a few days. In military respects the Polish question was of less importance than the Czech one last September. For Czecho-Slovakia had been very well armed and some of her troops had been quite good, and even if a similarly good mark must also be awarded to a few Polish regiments, yet a small fraction of the German army would suffice to destroy the Polish army. In a war, the bulk of the German army would in any case be deployed in the West.

Turning to the region of South East Europe, the Foreign Minister said that Germany, as the Führer had already remarked, had no territorial interests there. She was only interested for political reasons, to know who were her friends and who her foes. With the settlement of the Austrian-Moravian-Bohemian area, the territorial questions in that part of Europe had been solved, and that for all time.

On Spain the Foreign Minister remarked that Germany was very friendly with Franco who, in spite of the tempting offers of loans from the Western democracies, was not availing himself of such dubious favours but would remain on the side of the Axis and was regarded by Germany as a reliable friend.

In these circumstances it could reasonably be said that encirclement was not working as well as its originators wished and perhaps the day would come when the encirclers would themselves be encircled. One thing was certain: A bloc of 150 million people, Italy, Germany and the friends of the Axis, stood in Europe as a power factor not to be ignored. In this situation Germany naturally felt safe and secure and faced the future with confidence.

To the question of how this power was to be used the Führer had already replied, stating that he did not want war and was prepared to realize Germany's claims by diplomatic means. But people should not be misled into thinking that he would be diverted, by one iota, from his just claims. Germany, as he had said, did not want war. But if the others forced war upon her, she was at any time ready to fight. The Western democracies knew this and, conscious of their own weakness and the strength of the other bloc, they felt very unsafe and, in their comments on the situation, changed as drastically as the line on the temperature chart of a seriously ill person. Since they were so clear in their minds about the situation, the Western democracies would not wantonly unleash a war. Should they do so nevertheless, there were two possibilities. Either victory of the bloc within a few months or a war lasting ten years. Germany was prepared for either eventuality.

In economic respects, her supply of raw materials and food was fully secured. If, moreover, France were to assail the West Wall, future historians would one day describe this as the grave of the French people, whose national strength, even now, did not compare too favourably with Germany's, if one took into account that the French age groups, now due for call-up, yielded 100,000 men, whereas in Germany they amounted to 300,000 men even in the weak post-war years, and would increase later to 6-700,000 men a year.

A great deal was heard of Britain's armaments. Germany knew, however, that in September for example, anti-aircraft defence in Britain was practically non-existent. The present statements that everything was ready were, therefore, being regarded with great scepticism. The Führer in particular, being one of the greatest experts on rearmament, knew exactly how much time was needed for rearming a country.

Germany was certainly not seeking a life and death struggle with Britain but should it, nevertheless, come to this one day it would end with the destruction of Great Britain and the disintegration of the Empire. Britain today was in a considerably less favourable position than before. She would have to fight not only in the West but also at sea, not only in Europe, but also in Asia and Africa and, in the event of a ten years' war, Japan would certainly conquer all the British possessions in the Far East and thus bring about the loss of India to the Empire.

With reference to France, the Foreign Minister added that Germany, particularly on his personal initiative, had tried to reach an understanding with France. He had not yet given up hope that this would come about. Germany had no territorial demands on France. The Führer had given up Alsace-Lorraine once and for all. This meant a considerable concession, for after all, it could not be disputed that Strasbourg Cathedral had not been built by a Frenchman. In December, he (the Foreign Minister) had gone to France<sup>5</sup> and thought he had reached agreement with the French Foreign Minister on the limitation of their mutual spheres. France had now deviated from this line and had again increased her activities in the East. He (the Foreign Minister) hoped that this tendency of French policy, which, in his opinion, was not in keeping with France's true character, would again recede, and that it would yet be possible to reach an understanding with France, such as he had had in mind for a long time already.

The very setbacks which Roosevelt's policy had recently suffered in the House of Representatives and in the Senate<sup>6</sup> again threw light on America's doubtful attitude, and Britain was probably hoping for too much if she counted with absolute certainty on the cooperation of the United States in the event of a conflict.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 369-372.

<sup>6</sup> Presumably a reference to the debates on the Neutrality Bill; see document No. 650.

Kiosseivanov replied that he had followed the Foreign Minister's statements with great interest. It was Bulgaria's view that her hope of being able, for her part, to free herself from the great injustices of the Peace Treaties depended on Germany's strength. He (Kiosseivanov) could state quite categorically that Bulgaria would never join a combination of Powers which ran counter to German interests. He had been the subject of many intrigues, which had had reactions in all the capitals of Europe. In the face of this, he could only again and again reaffirm Bulgaria's policy of sincere friendship and community of interests with Germany. That was the basis of Bulgaria's whole foreign policy.

In conclusion, the Foreign Minister also promised that Germany would do everything to expedite as much as possible the delivery of the 2,000 machine guns mentioned by Kiosseivanov to the Führer, and that all deliveries of arms would be speeded up, taking aircraft material into special consideration. Furthermore, Bulgaria was to receive, at the Führer's wish, some of the most modern German howitzers. For the consultation on military matters, as envisaged in yesterday's conversation with the Führer, the Foreign Minister suggested as German representatives Minister von Richthofen and the German Military Attaché in Sofia in an unofficial capacity.

After a brief reference to Italy's interests in the South Eastern regions, the Foreign Minister again emphasized that, as realists, the Duce and the Führer did not wish to grope in the dark and that therefore a clarification, to be treated confidentially, of the points already discussed with the Führer was important. These points were: 1) state of Bulgaria's defences; 2) views of the military authorities on the tactics to be adopted in the event of a conflict; 3) Bulgaria's revisionist claims; 4) Bulgaria's requirements in respect of support from outside.

In this connection, Kiosseivanov again emphasized the importance for Bulgaria of deliveries of machine guns, since reports had reached her that the Turkish General Staff together with British officers were in Adrianople. He then said that on his return journey, he would have a short talk with Prince Paul at Bled<sup>7</sup> on Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations. In this connection, he complained about the statements made by Yugoslavia and Rumania on the solidity of the Balkan Pact which, after all, was directed solely against Bulgaria. In any case, Yugoslavia's attitude seemed to him very ambiguous. It lacked a friendly spirit *vis-à-vis* Bulgaria.

The Foreign Minister reassured Kiosseivanov regarding Yugoslavia's intentions. That country would never undertake anything against the Axis. She neither could, nor would, do this on account of her general

<sup>7</sup> On July 9-10, conversations took place at Bled on Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations, at which the Foreign Ministers of both countries were present.

position within the orbit of the Axis Powers and because of her domestic difficulties. Anyway, by her latest action, Turkey had destroyed the essence of the Balkan Pact and thus indirectly rendered Bulgaria a service.

In conclusion Kiosseivanov put forward another Bulgarian request, namely, for the supply of 30-40 Czech tanks for equipping a motorized division.

It was further decided to conclude a press agreement and a cultural agreement between Germany and Bulgaria.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister as instructed.<sup>8</sup>

DR. SCHMIDT  
Minister

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<sup>8</sup> In a circular telegram, Pol. IV 4097 of July 12 (not printed, 585/242444-45), to the Missions at Paris, London, Rome, Brussels, Moscow, Warsaw, Tarabya, San Sebastian, Bucharest, Belgrade, Sofia and Athens and to the Consulate at Geneva, Weizsäcker summarized Kiosseivanov's remarks and said that his visit had been satisfactory from every point of view.

## No. 619

472/228692-95

*Ambassador Ott to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

Tokyo, July 5, 1939.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: I should like to add to today's report<sup>1</sup> on Admiral Foerster's visit, that the Admiral has applied himself with great skill and obvious success to the task of strengthening the self-confidence of the leaders of the Japanese Navy in their attitude to the British and American fleets. After he had worked at this almost daily for eighteen days, we agreed that there was nothing more left for him to do and the right time had come for his departure. In addition to this, he carried out the last telegraphic instructions concerning America's neutrality<sup>2</sup> at his farewell visit, and will personally report to you on his impressions after his return at the end of July.

The views expressed here again and again on the subject of America are quite cleverly summed up in the appended account by an old Parliamentarian.<sup>3</sup> They are partly childlike but are also firmly fixed in people's minds here with childlike obstinacy. The German view, which I advanced, that an unconditional alliance would be the surest way of bringing about America's neutrality, was countered, in particular, by the following arguments:

If Japan concluded a military alliance with Germany and Italy, this would not intimidate America. Japan could not wage an effective

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 537.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

naval war against America, scarcely even against Hawaii, let alone an economic war, for trade between the two countries was only vital for Japan but in no way for America. Should Japan cease to be a supplier to America, this would cause a shortage of silk there, the effect of which on the national economy would be insignificant. Should, however, Japan cease to be a buyer, no stagnation in sales would ensue in America, for the oil, scrap and cotton which make up Japan's main purchases would, in a crisis, and the more so in time of war, find their way to Powers friendly to America.

A military alliance with Germany and Italy would not provide Japan with any means of exerting pressure on America, but would, on the contrary, rather expose her to possible economic pressure by America which might be fatal as long as her economy does not stand on its own feet. Admiral Endo, the Japanese Naval Attaché in Berlin, also put forward similar arguments in an official interview with the Chief of Naval Operations at the end of May, on which a strictly confidential memorandum<sup>3</sup> was sent by our Navy to the Naval Attaché at the Embassy.

As to the negotiations for an alliance, these arguments confirm once again that the Navy has been fighting tenaciously for a policy of waiting and seeing what America would do, and of entering a war only at a later stage. After the Army had forced through the acceptance of a formula of agreement, it (the Navy) wished to ensure a last possibility of holding back, at least in the event of the Soviet Union's non-participation. The necessary German demand for a clear interpretation has exposed the weakness of the formula of agreement and, as I reported in telegram No. 277 of July 1,<sup>4</sup> led to rather conflicting interpretations. The old divergencies of opinion between the Army and Navy are again coming to light, but are obviously restricted to the exceptional and special case of Russia's non-participation in a war.

The Army has informed me of its determination to consider favourably an unconditional alliance and I do not doubt the sincerity of this statement. It will prove difficult to arrive at an understanding with the Navy, since the latter can contend that the main burden of a war in which Russia does not participate will fall on it. To what extent the Army has the strength to carry its point, depends essentially on the need for an alliance by which the Army itself is motivated. The military Attaché at the Embassy points out, in the appended memorandum,<sup>5</sup> that Japan can avoid a conflict with Britain in the China War as well as win, by her own strength, a war against Russia in the Far East, if in either case she (Japan) sets herself limited objectives. From this he concludes that the Japanese Army's objectives on the mainland

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 597.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (472/228696-704).

no longer require the alliance with Germany and Italy with that degree of extreme urgency that has hitherto motivated the Army.

I cannot entirely accept his conclusion and even today I consider that the need for an alliance has not diminished.

With regard to Russia, my view is further confirmed by the nervousness with which the Army, in particular, is watching Germany's alleged *rapprochement* with Russia, that is, the danger of Japan's isolation. The need for an alliance in the China War must also be considered to have grown, since it hardly seems to me any longer possible for Japan to confine herself to North China, which would be the prerequisite for a settlement with Britain.

Despite my objections to the Military Attaché's arguments, they are worthy of most careful consideration. They draw attention to the fact that, in the further negotiations, the Army may reach a point where its own need for an alliance and the weight of the Navy's opposition will counterbalance each other, and a deadlock or even a setback will result. The serious view which General Machijiri takes of the prospects of the renewed arguments with the Navy proves that the Army is conscious of this danger. If it is of importance to us to bind Japan to our side against Britain by an alliance soon, we, too, must bear this danger in mind. This may perhaps one day prove to be greater than that of Japanese reservations which will break down in the face of reality. Once Japan is included in an alliance, she cannot in my opinion withdraw again; on the contrary, in the event of a conflict the authoritative regular Army and Navy officers will certainly force her to take action as far as Japanese striking power in any way permits.<sup>6</sup>

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

OTT

<sup>6</sup> This document is initialled by Ribbentrop and marked: "[For] Führer".

## No. 620

8045/E573884-87

### *Secret Protocol between Germany and Yugoslavia*

The following agreement is made between the German Government, represented by His Excellency the German Minister in Belgrade, Herr Viktor von Heeren, and the Royal Yugoslav Government, represented by His Excellency M. Vojin Djuričić, Minister of Finance:

#### I

1. The German Government are agreed that the competent Yugoslav authorities may place orders for war material, with the exception of aircraft, with firms in the German Reich to an extent still to be specified.



2. The competent Yugoslav authorities will place the orders in question with the firms concerned within one year. Payment for war material is to be made within a period of ten years from the day of placing the order.

3. When placing their orders the Yugoslav Government will hand to the firms Treasury Bonds bearing interest at six per cent and which are to be redeemed in equal half-yearly instalments. The dates on which interest is due will be arranged by agreement between the Yugoslav Government and the German suppliers.

4. The Treasury Bonds are designated in Reichsmarks. Should the international rate of the free Reichsmark change between the day of issue of the bonds and the day of their redemption, the amount of Reichsmark value of the bonds will be correspondingly adjusted.

It is, however, agreed that the Reichsmark value of the Treasury Bonds shall not be increased if the depreciation of the free Reichsmark is less than the under-valuation of the Reichsmark which, in the German-Yugoslav clearing, results from the rate provided for in the Cologne Protocol<sup>1</sup> after January 1, 1940.

Should the Dinar too be devalued, the situation thereby created shall be specially examined, within the framework of the negotiations of the Government Committees of both sides, with a view to giving the German creditors the same amount in Reichsmarks which would have been due to them had the Dinar not been devalued. If the depreciation of the free Reichsmark should exceed the under-valuation of the Reichsmark in the German-Yugoslav clearing according to paragraph 2 [of section 4], the Reichsmark value shall be increased by the difference.

Technical details with regard to the conditions of issue of the Treasury Bonds shall be settled between the Yugoslav authorities and the firm concerned whenever an order is placed.

5. Payment of instalments due will be made according to the provisions of the German-Yugoslav clearing agreement.

6. If the German-Yugoslav clearing agreement lapses during the period within which payments are to be made under this Protocol, these payments shall be made under the provisions in force at the time for the transfer of German export proceeds from Yugoslavia to Germany.

7. The German Government shall abstain from demanding payment of part of the purchase price in free exchange on which they otherwise insist in the case of war material deliveries. The Yugoslav Government agree that in return, payment for deliveries under this Protocol shall be made in additional raw materials to the value of half the annual credit instalments. For this purpose, the Yugoslav Government

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (3052/601215-29); this contains the conclusions reached at the eighth joint session (at Cologne, May 20-June 7, 1939) of the Yugoslav and German Government Committees set up under the German-Yugoslav Commercial Treaty of May 1, 1934.

are prepared to sanction additional deliveries of raw materials and timber to Germany over and above the existing agreed export quotas for these products to an amount of half the yearly instalments. The allocation of additional deliveries shall be made by the Government according to Germany's requirements and Yugoslavia's supplying capacity. As for the surveying and exploitation of the raw material resources the Yugoslav Government shall favourably consider German requests and applications and grant them as far as possible.

## II

8. The German Government are further agreed that the competent Yugoslav authorities shall place orders for delivery of aircraft with firms in the German Reich to an extent likewise still to be determined.

9. The conditions for ordering and for payment for these aircraft are identical with those agreed on in the foregoing sections 2-7 for the ordering of war material, except that the duration of the credit from the day of placing the order shall not be ten but six years.

## III

10. The German Government agree that the competent Yugoslav authorities shall buy ready-manufactured war material and aircraft to an extent still to be agreed, up to the amounts to be fixed in accordance with sections 1 and 8 above. Payment whether for war material or for aircraft is to be effected on the lines of the agreements reached in sections 2-7, or section 9.

## IV

11. The German Government agree that the credit terms laid down in II, 9, shall apply to possible Yugoslav orders for telephone cables in Germany.

Special arrangements for the type of raw materials to be delivered in this case under I, 7, shall be made later.

## V

12. This protocol becomes effective on the day of signature and shall be treated as secret by both Governments.

Signed at Belgrade in duplicate on July 5, 1939.

The Royal Yugoslav  
Minister of Finance,  
V. DJURICIC

The German Minister,  
v. HEEREN

## No. 621

5555/E395347

*The Legation in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 285 of July 6

BUCHAREST, July 6, 1939—11:45 p.m.

Received July 7—6:10 a.m.

W 1054 g.

1. Discussions with Rumanian Ministers have today been brought to a conclusion after extensive negotiations with the Minister President in the presence of the Minister of Economics.<sup>1</sup> War material questions have been settled on the following basis:<sup>2</sup>

(1) Transactions regarding aircraft equipment on the conditions so far proposed by the German negotiators, i.e., 5½ per cent and eight half-yearly instalments from April 1, 1940. Payment in kind exclusively petroleum.

(2) Revolving credit on conditions as envisaged by departments in Berlin, i.e., 20 millions, five years, 6 per cent. Conclusion of individual transactions in eighteen months.

(3) The Rumanian Government have withdrawn their request, at first put forward emphatically, for a formal credit agreement on war material and are satisfied with a protocol in which it is stated that the Rumanian Armaments Ministry may place orders, within the limits of the credit provided for in the Treaty of March 23, 1939,<sup>3</sup> with German firms on terms of credit of three to seven years at 5 per cent on 20 per cent advance payment. Discussions on the issue of Treasury Bonds are to be opened in Berlin by a representative of the Rumanian Finance Ministry as soon as possible. All other details of conditions of payment have been reserved for private sales contracts; deliveries in exchange will be agreed on by Government Committees by virtue of the Protocol of December 10, 1938.<sup>4</sup>

II. The above settlement is in accordance with .... (group mutilated) agreements reached in Berlin between departments before my departure, as interest rates of 5 per cent had already been agreed, and the terms of credit of three to seven years were not, in general, considerably to exceed twice the period for delivery, and the extent of the credit is not being fixed. In fact, owing to the already heavy claims on the 250 million credit provided for in the March Treaty for further war material orders, there remains at most only some 50 million RM,

<sup>1</sup> Armand Călinescu and Ion E. Bujoiu.

<sup>2</sup> For the Protocol, signed on July 8, see document No. 638.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 78.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (7182/E527329-88).

which we should in any case have to make available for individual contracts.<sup>5</sup>

A further report follows on other results of the negotiations.<sup>6</sup>

CLODIUS

FABRICIUS

<sup>5</sup> In a memorandum of July 7 (not printed, 2104/455675-76), Wiehl recommended that, in view of the OKW's assent and provided that Göring raised no objections, the agreement might be accepted.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 632.

## No. 622

1724/400984-86

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P. 24

WARSAW, July 6, 1939.

Received July 7.

Pol. V 6351.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The Polish attitude to events in Danzig.

The events in Danzig have been interpreted here as a sign that Germany is determined to solve the Danzig question by force if need be. The repeated meetings between the President and the advisers on matters of foreign and military policy, the presence in Warsaw of the London Ambassador, Raczyński, and the visits of the British Chargé d'Affaires to the Foreign Minister show that a lively exchange of views is going on between the allies. I learn that Government quarters here are inclined to the view that what is taking place in Danzig is predominantly in the nature of a demonstration. But there are also agitators who take the view that Poland's rights have already now been clearly violated and that a counter action is necessary. It is, of course, fully realized here that any counter action would mean war. Up to the present, however, there is no reason to suppose that the more moderate elements will not keep the upper hand. From every aspect it would, in fact, be to the disadvantage of the Polish Government to adopt aggressive tactics in the face of a situation which is not yet fully clear. Whether in such a case French and British aid would be available, and whether public opinion in the democratic countries could then be roused to the desired degree may be doubtful.

How great is the nervousness of the public here, is shown by the paradoxical effect produced by the publication of our Note on the forthcoming visit of the cruiser *Königsberg*.<sup>1</sup> It might have been expected that the announcement of the visit of a German warship—and that in August, the month clouded with prophecies of war—would

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 580.

arouse fresh unrest. Instead, this announcement made through the regular channels, quite obviously resulted in a relaxation of tension, because it was regarded as proof of Germany's still abiding by the Danzig Statute. It would be wrong, however, to regard this nervousness as tantamount to fear. There is hardly any doubt that in the present excited state of the whole country a clear violation of Poland's rights in Danzig would not be tolerated. The determination to fight is general. In this connection reliance on the Allies and their repeated assurances probably plays a large part. Though the Poles fear that they cannot hold out more than a few months with their own army, there is complete confidence in the final victory of the encirclement Powers. There are even large groups who would welcome war now since, in their opinion, the favourable circumstance that Britain is prepared to take up arms in defence of the *status quo* in Danzig, may perhaps not recur so soon. As things are today, any Government will be compelled to take this warlike mood into account.

However, the impression gained, particularly from the events of the last few days, is that the *carte blanche* given to the Polish Government is not, after all, as unlimited as at first appeared from the Anglo-Polish Agreement.<sup>2</sup> It would seem from various indications that Britain has obviously safeguarded herself against being involved in a war against her will by obtaining from Poland an undertaking to consult her. This, on the other hand, also means a safeguard for Poland against being left without help at the crucial moment as well as a kind of brake on rash actions which, in view of the Polish character, can certainly not be ruled out altogether.<sup>3</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Anglo-Polish declaration of Apr. 6; see document No. 169, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]."

## No. 623

533/239090

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 542

BERLIN, July 6, 1939.

During his last visit I had remarked incidentally to the Nuncio that the Curia could do something to ease the general situation, in that their clergy in Western Poland instead of stirring up trouble might pour oil on the troubled waters.<sup>1</sup>

The Nuncio has now told me unofficially today that he has passed

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to Bergen of June 23 (not printed, 3021/598467-68) Weizsäcker stated that during the Nuncio's last visit he mentioned to him the provocative attitude of the clergy in Western Poland towards Germany.

on my private remark to Rome, and has been informed that the suggestion was being followed up. At the same time he had been told, however, that it was hoped that Germany was also working for peace. I told the Nuncio that this went without saying.

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Typewritten marginal notes: "[For the] Foreign Minister." "Under State Secretary, Deputy Director of the Political Department. No use should be made of the foregoing outside this office since the Nuncio expressly stated that his communication was not official but purely private."

## No. 624

584/242300

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Secretariat of the State Secretary*

BERLIN, July 6, 1939.

On instructions of the Reichsführer-SS, his Adjutants' Office telephoned this afternoon with the request to inform the State Secretary that the Reichsführer had submitted to the Führer the draft communiqué on the resettlement of Reich Germans from the South Tyrol forwarded to him by Counsellor Mohrmann.<sup>1</sup> The Führer had ordered that the communiqué was not to be published and also that in the future no press announcements referring to the South Tyrol were to be made without his express permission. At the same time the Führer had stated that this order was also binding on the Foreign Ministry.

I asked for written confirmation of this communication, which was, however, not promised me, since the Adjutants' Office of the Reichsführer-SS was passing on an order which they, too, had only received over the telephone. As Counsellor Mohrmann had already been notified, the sole purpose of the telephone call to me was to ensure that the State Secretary also was informed at once.

Respectfully submitted to the  
State Secretary<sup>2</sup>

SIEGFRIED

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<sup>1</sup> Such a draft communiqué (not printed, 8441/E594115), dated July 4, is filed with a minute (not printed, 8441/E594116) by Mohrmann, an official of Political Division IV, dated July 7, recording the receipt by telephone of similar instructions to those contained in this document. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 454, 474 and 475.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "To the U[nder] St[ate] S[ecretary], Pol[itical Department] with the request to take further action. W[eizsäcker] 7/7".

## No. 625

2883/565332

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
No. 286 of July 7BUCHAREST, July 7, 1939—1:00 p.m.  
Received July 7—3:50 p.m.  
Pol. IV 4031.

The morning press here prominently published extracts from the German press and *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* according to which Germany is prepared to support Bulgaria's revisionist claims to the Dobruja too.

Rumania has hitherto adhered to her neutrality and, in spite of all efforts made by London and Paris, has not allowed herself to deviate from this policy and has also promised loyal fulfilment of the Economic Treaty with Germany.<sup>1</sup> Today we are on the eve of big agreements<sup>2</sup> which will ensure us further considerable oil supplies, and which could be endangered by emphasizing Bulgarian revisionist policy towards Rumania and be to the advantage of Britain's efforts.

I urgently request telegraphic instructions on the language to be held by me; as Stelzer<sup>3</sup> arrives tomorrow, I am available for discussions in Berlin.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 78.<sup>2</sup> See document No. 621.<sup>3</sup> Counsellor at the German Legation at Bucharest.

## No. 626

1625/389068-69

*The Acting Deputy Director of the Political Department to  
the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 144

BERLIN, July 7, 1939—7:10 p.m.  
zu Pol. II 2433, 2434.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 118 of June 30,<sup>2</sup> paragraph 1.  
For information.

The Legations in Helsinki and Stockholm were instructed to inform the Finnish/Swedish Government that our agreement to the alterations

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<sup>1</sup> Telegrams from Helsinki Nos. 89 and 90 of July 5; not printed, see document No. 589, footnote 3.<sup>2</sup> See document No. 612 and footnote 1 thereto.

in the Aaland Convention obviously applied only to the text submitted to us. We stipulated that the Russian demand should be categorically rejected and that we should be kept informed on the matter.

After carrying out the instructions the Legation in Helsinki telegraphed on July 5<sup>3</sup> as follows:

The Finnish Foreign Minister stated that Finland refused Molotov's demand for equal rights with Sweden in the Aalands. Naturally German agreement only applied to the text submitted. The Finnish Government were trying to get the Swedish Government, in the interests of the signatory Powers too, to bring the Aalands question to a conclusion. The fortifications of the Aalands had meantime been begun.<sup>4</sup>

KAMPHOEVENER

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 90; see footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> The text of this last paragraph was repeated to Stockholm in telegram No. 108 of July 7 (not printed, 1625/389069).

## No. 627

1625/389094-96

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 287 of July 7

BUCHAREST, July 7, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 8—7:25 p.m.

Pol. II 2507.

With reference to my telegram No. 286 of July 7.<sup>2</sup>

Foreign Minister Gafencu, whom I visited on another matter, immediately broached the subject of German and Italian press statements about Bulgarian revisionist claims. Rumania, he said, had unequivocally affirmed the policy of neutrality, and by the Economic Treaty with Germany had made known her definite intentions. The Economic Treaty was more than a treaty of alliance as it made Rumania accessible to German economic influence. Now, in the press, Germany, though not as strongly as Italy, came out in support of Bulgaria's revisionist claims on Rumanian territory. That was Rumania's tenderest spot. He did not understand in what way Rumania had deserved this. After all, the economic discussions with Clodius were going well.<sup>3</sup> Had we then any other reason for deviating from the course which he had discussed in Berlin with the Führer, the Field Marshal and the Foreign Minister?<sup>4</sup>

I replied that I too had been dismayed by this morning's reports in

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 625.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 621.

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 227 and 234.



the Rumanian press, and had as yet no explanation of them, as the German newspapers had not yet arrived. The material I had to hand was completely factual and made no mention whatever of direct German support of any Bulgarian revisionism over the Dobruja. I myself was convinced of Rumania's goodwill in pursuing a policy of neutrality, and I had the same impression of the Berlin authorities, who were working loyally at shaping the Economic Agreement with Rumania, also in the field of armaments: this was the clearest proof of our attitude towards Rumania. But on the other hand he knew that the British declaration of guarantee<sup>5</sup> had sown mistrust in Berlin; and now came reports from all sides of a Turkish guarantee of Rumania's non-Balkan frontiers. I had approached him two days ago on the subject and he had given me an evasive answer. In this state of affairs distrust of his policy would naturally arise. Gafencu replied that what Britain asked of Turkey was not a guarantee of Rumania's frontiers but that, if a case arose in which the guarantee became operative, Turkey should enable Britain to give effective aid to the countries she guaranteed, without listing them by name. The text had so far been withheld from him, and had presumably not yet been completed. (The situation, therefore, probably is that even if she is not herself attacked, Turkey is to allow Britain passage through the Dardanelles, to hasten to Rumania's aid.)

I told Gafencu that I must expect him to resist vigorously the insertion of such a clause in the Turco-British treaty. These proceedings were tantamount to preparation for war, and we should have to regard them as Rumania's drifting into the British policy of encirclement.

Gafencu tried to dispute this; it was a similar guarantee to the British one, and was (1) unilateral, (2) given without Rumania's desire, and (3) valid only if Rumania were attacked and offered resistance. He repeated his request that Germany should give him the same guarantee, for which he had already asked us.

I replied that he had never formally made this request, so that we had never had to define our position on it, but that the present was a bad moment to choose for it, which he admitted. As regards the other questions, however, he should suggest to the Turks that they resist most strongly the formula Britain proposed to them. Rumania must surely understand that we could not look on disinterestedly whilst Britain entangled the guaranteed countries more and more in the net of encirclement, and that we too must define our position.

Gafencu realized the seriousness of the position and promised to discuss the matter with the Minister President. This, he said, would be made much more difficult if Germany and Italy had given Bulgaria

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 189.

assurances concerning the Dobruja, for Rumania held absolutely to her present frontiers and would defend them against all aggressors. During the conversation a telegram arrived from the Rumanian Legation in Sofia, and was submitted to the Foreign Minister. It stated that the Berlin speeches and the statements in the German press had inflamed Bulgarian public opinion to fever pitch, and had intensified the belligerent mood against Rumania.<sup>6</sup>

The Foreign Minister said, "Have we deserved this, we who, the King and the whole Government, are doing our utmost for a *rapprochement* with Germany, are ordering arms and military supplies from Germany, and laying our country open to her economically? How on earth are we to carry out the contracts based on the Economic Treaty in such circumstances? The feeling of the population will become unbearable."

I replied that one must keep calm, avoid inflammatory press reports, and above all keep clear of the Anglo-Turkish treaty, for, after all, the tricky situation was due only to the British policy of encirclement and the foolish Turkish treaty. But the sufferers would, in the end, be those who, like Rumania, were nearest to the Central Powers. Gafencu appreciated this.

FABRICIUS

<sup>6</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 266.

## No. 628

103/111455-57

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 142

BERLIN, July 7,<sup>1</sup> 1939.<sup>2</sup>  
[zu] W 973 g; W 993 g.<sup>3</sup>

With reference to your telegrams No. 111 of June 25, No. 113 of June 27,<sup>3</sup> and 115 of June 29.<sup>4</sup>

A. You are requested to answer Mikoyan's question about the points still outstanding as follows:

I. Our readiness to grant the Soviet Union a commercial credit of 200 million RM in accordance with the procedure so far discussed (payment through Dego),<sup>5</sup> and to use the Soviet schedules, Lists A and B,<sup>6</sup> as a basis for German deliveries, depends on the balance in our

<sup>1</sup> The date on this telegram as first drafted read June 28, which has been amended to July 7. See document No. 596.

<sup>2</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 568 and 570.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 579. This reference has been inserted by hand on the first draft.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., Deutsche Golddiskontbank.

<sup>6</sup> The lists to which reference is here made have not been found; but see vol. VII of this Series, document No. 131.

current trade. The 160 million RM worth of raw materials so far offered by the Soviets in current trading, 80 million RM of which is for timber, is no equivalent return for highest grade German deliveries to the amount envisaged. This is the decisive point, on the satisfactory settlement of which depends the conclusion of the agreement.

II. The other questions outstanding are:

1) Term of credit. Concessions to meet the Soviet proposal are possible.

2) Interest. A solution must be sought acceptable to both parties.

3) Currency guarantee clause in the credit agreement.

4) Two-year delivery period in order to ensure that German industry is able to make the deliveries.

5) Shipment clause.

6) Wording of emergency clause (Article 8), wording of price clause, repayment of credit (Article 5).

7) Assuring the functioning of the arbitration procedure.

8) Revising the text.

III. For us the chief obstacle so far has been fulfilling the Soviet orders. We are now in a position to make firm statements on the capacity of German industry to deliver, and therefore, as far as we are concerned, we see a possibility of continuing the negotiations.

IV. As requested, we are transmitting the German agenda, as above, for the negotiations. The Soviet Government must now finally make up their minds whether they wish to negotiate with us on this basis.

B. [We leave it to your discretion whether or not to postpone carrying out these instructions under A until after the next discussion with Molotov, provided the delay thus caused is not more than a few days. We do not consider a longer delay to be advisable.]<sup>7</sup>

We, for our part, do not, at first, wish to depart from having the negotiations conducted by Schnurre as special plenipotentiary in Moscow, the less so as this is in accordance with Mikoyan's original plan. Please therefore do not [for the moment]<sup>7</sup> make any suggestions on the lines of your telegram No. 113 of June 27. The question of future procedure will be decided here when the result of the discussions with [Molotov and]<sup>7</sup> Mikoyan is known.

The conversation with Mikoyan must incidentally not be conducted in such a way as to assume the character of pressure by Germany. Our standpoint should rather be objectively and soberly stated and further action left to the Russians. We should on no account place ourselves in the position of suppliants.<sup>8</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> The passage in square brackets was deleted before despatch.

<sup>8</sup> This paragraph has been added by hand on the draft.

<sup>9</sup> Marginal notes: (i) Typewritten. "Before despatch to the Under State Secretary Political Department for counter-signature". (ii) Handwritten. "Before despatch, to the Foreign Minister".

## No. 629

909/204183-87

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

ROME, July 7, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

No. 303 of July 7

Pol. V 1583 g.

Ciano asked me to call on him this evening to inform me that the British Ambassador had been to see him this morning to ask him to arrange an audience with the Duce for the purpose of handing over a message from Chamberlain to Mussolini. As this was a communication from one Head of the Government to another, Ciano had acceded to this request and had gone with Percy Loraine to the Duce this morning.

On Chamberlain's instructions<sup>2</sup> the British Ambassador had set forth to the Duce the ideas outlined below:

The European situation had once again become so critical that Chamberlain, remembering the desire for peace expressed by Mussolini during the Rome visit, had no hesitation in drawing Mussolini's attention to certain facts. Very remarkable preparations were in progress. Men disguised as tourists, and arms, too, were entering Danzig from the Reich, and this was said to be the prelude to a declaration by the Danzig authorities of a Danzig *Anschluss* to the Reich, which it was said would be accompanied by a display of military force and assurances of military assistance from the German Government in case of Polish counter measures.

Such developments would undoubtedly lead immediately to a European war, for Great Britain was absolutely united in her determination to carry out her pledges to Poland, and the position was the same for France.

Before Europe drifted into such a catastrophe it was necessary to be quite clear about the situation.

Germany's claim to Danzig could not be based on the grounds that the German population was subjected to oppression, as the Danzig Administration was purely German.

The Germans in Danzig depended for their prosperity on Polish trade. On the other hand Poland's economic existence depended on her free access to the sea, which was commanded by Danzig. The present Danzig regime, though it might not be perfect, did largely take these facts into account.

<sup>1</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Sent by air courier to save expense." Handwritten marginal note: "[For the] Foreign Minister. W[eizsäcker] 8/7".

<sup>2</sup> For the instructions to Sir Percy Loraine see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 234; for his account of this interview, see No. 261. See also the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of July 7, 1939, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 463.

The *Anschluss* of Danzig to the Reich could not be accepted because (1) it would result from the use of force or the threat of force, and (2) in the Polish view the German Government's desire for an *Anschluss* was prompted not by sentiment but by their intention to use Danzig as a weapon pointed at Poland. Apart from grave fears for their economic life, the Poles, with the example of Czecho-Slovakia before them, were afraid that if Danzig became a part of the Reich it would be used as a military base against Poland for the purpose of ultimately destroying her independence.

If this appraisal of the situation was right, then it was certain that an *Anschluss* would mean a war in which Italy, Great Britain, and many other countries who had today no quarrel with one another would be involved.

But if the German Government had no such intentions and were willing to give proof of it, then it ought to be possible, as the atmosphere cooled, for the German and Polish Governments to enter upon discussions and to find a peaceful settlement of the differences.

That was how the position appeared to the British Government and Chamberlain had thought it right to warn Mussolini of these dangers.

Percy Loraine had left these statements with the Duce in the form of an *Aide-Mémoire*.

The Duce had given the British Ambassador the following answer for Chamberlain:

1) If, as Chamberlain stated, Danzig was *de facto* German, he, Mussolini, saw no reason at all why it should not also become *de jure* German.

2) The Polish thesis that Danzig was indispensable to Polish trade etc. was untenable in that form, for Poland herself had built a harbour of her own at Gdynia; moreover, even after its return to the Reich, Danzig would always be at Poland's disposal for economic purposes. He only needed to recall the happy solution which had now been reached with Lithuania over the port of Memel.

3) From a military point of view the return of Danzig to the Reich would make no difference, and in particular it would not improve the strategic position of the Reich, which had East Prussia and Slovakia at its disposal.

4) It must not be forgotten that the policy of *rapprochement* between the Reich and Poland and the Ten Year Pact were entirely the personal work of the Führer, who therefore was personally hurt and very bitterly disappointed by the present course of events.

5) Poland ought to be the last to quote as an example the developments in Czecho-Slovakia, since, at the decisive moment when Czecho-Slovakia was already down, Poland, without herself running any risk, had dealt her the *coup de grâce* and, by conduct which he could only describe as *malhonnête*, had, so to speak, become a despoiler of the corpse.

6) As far as the desired cooling of the atmosphere was concerned, the first thing was to stop encouraging the Poles further in their war psychosis, and rather to urge them to take up direct negotiations with Germany.

7) A return of Danzig to the Reich would in no way affect the integrity and independence of Poland, whereas in the event of war Poland's fate would, to say the least, be uncertain. Indeed, going beyond this, it might be said that, whatever the outcome of such a war might be for the other countries, Poland would disappear from the map.

8) If the British declared that they were prepared in all circumstances to support Poland's case by force of arms, then there must not be the slightest doubt that Italy would equally be on Germany's side.

Finally Ciano said that, when bidding goodbye to the Ambassador at the door, the Duce asked Ciano, who had acted as interpreter during the conversation, to repeat to the British Ambassador very clearly the statement in paragraph 8.

The British Ambassador had made no reply to Mussolini's remark, but was visibly very dejected.

The copy of the *Aide-Mémoire* referred to above, which Ciano gave me, is being sent by air courier, addressed to the State Secretary personally.<sup>3</sup>

V. MACKENSEN

<sup>3</sup> A copy in English of this *Aide-Mémoire* (909/294188-90) was sent to Weizsäcker by Mackensen under cover of a note (not printed, 472/228610) dated July 7, 1939; it is marked for submission to Ribbentrop. The text of the *Aide-Mémoire*, except for a very few minor verbal differences is identical with that printed in *British Documents*, loc. cit., No. 234. Filed in Mackensen's file with his copy of the cover note (100/64544) is a document in Italian (not printed, 100/64545-46) which appears not to have been transmitted to Berlin. It lists, under eight points, the main heads of Mussolini's reply; the initial "M" and the date "July 7, XVII" are typed at the foot. It is reproduced, with some slight verbal differences, in *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, as No. 505, where it is described as a Pro Memoria from Mussolini to Ciano.

## No. 630

G82/C001373-78

### *The Auslandsorganisation to the Chief of the Reich Chancellery*

BERLIN, July 7, 1939.

Received July 8.

RK 19324 A.

I enclose a situation report by the Press Director of the Landesgruppe for Great Britain of the Auslandsorganisation, giving an outline of the present situation in Britain.

Heil Hitler!

By order:  
KODERLE<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "The report has already been submitted by the Aufklärungsausschuss Ha[mburg]-Bre[men]. The Minister has seen it." The reference is to a propaganda organization; for details see Glossary.

[Enclosure]

LONDON, June 29, 1939.

## POLITICAL SITUATION REPORT

Preparations are now being made in Britain in every field as if war were imminent.

The people's preparedness for war, which we have often described, is, by contrast to September, exceptionally well advanced. They are quite ready for war to break out at any moment. This very real mental and moral preparedness of the people by no means corresponds as yet to a determination by the Government to go to war at once. The existence of this popular feeling is, however, of immense assistance in taking all measures, especially in Parliament.

It can be said, with a fair amount of certainty, that Chamberlain himself, and the inner, deciding group of the Cabinet, are definitely working to prevent the outbreak of war, and would prefer a compromise over Danzig and the Corridor, which might be acceptable to their people, to any belligerent action. The six months of propaganda: "No more appeasement",<sup>2</sup> rises to outbursts of rage as soon as the Government so much as show a sign of giving way.

Besides this, the influence steadily increases of those leading politicians who believe that the Empire can only be saved if, very soon, as a first practical step of the encirclement policy, a military showdown with Germany takes place. For only after this would it be possible to turn to the Far East or any other place where British rule is threatened. The political principle that Great Britain must be able to blockade all her enemies with her Navy, is again felt to be applicable to Germany and Italy. The "economic and political living space" of Germany and Italy is looked upon as a direct threat to British imperialism, hence the challenge to Germany when the Four Year Plan was announced;<sup>3</sup> hence also the mixing up of the concepts of British world trade and British foreign policy.

The view, widespread in Germany, that Britain must fear the loss of her Empire in a war is not shared here. Both the population and the leaders believe that Britain could well win a war, and in any case would stand a good chance of slowly wearing Germany down or rendering her powerless. All the difficulties in the Dominions, and in India too, are not thought here to involve the risk of a stand against Britain in the event of war. Even responsible men in the Dominions are convinced that, if not at the start, in any case in the long run, their countries would have to enter any war on the side of Britain. Their

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> The Four Year Plan had been announced on Sept. 9, 1936, at the Nuremberg Party Rally.

argument is that the Dominions and India will eventually have to choose whether they wish to be under British or German influence. Given such an alternative they would definitely, for economic, political, and ideological reasons, come down on the side of Great Britain.

The views of 1919, namely that there are no victors in a world war, have been completely forgotten by the broad masses of the British people. On the contrary, latterly there has been a general feeling that Britain, after all, won the World War, and is therefore entitled to be much better off than the vanquished.

Germany's official diplomatic representation here takes the view that negotiations can very well be continued with Britain, and that the British Government are even inclined to reach an understanding with Germany and to maintain peace. I am unable to judge to what extent this attitude is a matter of principle only. I do believe, however, in common with competent political observers who are resident here or who have come over temporarily from the Reich, that Britain today is not prepared to agree to the German conditions for an understanding, and that she would rather risk war than give way to German pressure. Most people who come here now from the Reich to gather information are astonished and deeply impressed by Britain's unmistakable fighting spirit, which they meet everywhere.

It is considered here that military preparations have reached a certain maximum which, given the whole situation, is not unfavourable. Apart from her standing army, Great Britain has 275,000 new recruits ready for training. The lines of defence, that is, the comparatively extensive air defences in the south and south-east of Britain, are manned continuously. The coastal observation stations and the civilian Air Raid Protection organizations are also mobilized. The great gaps in armament remain, especially in the army in the field, but that is not so very important because the tactical plans, particularly at the beginning of a war, do not assign any sizable tasks to the British army in the field. The air defence, it is thought, is in a position successfully to ward off, though not to prevent, attacks on Britain for a long time. In any case it is considered that the armaments industry can be completely protected and its capacity increased. The Navy, it is thought, can carry out a successful blockade, and can also combat submarine warfare by Germany sufficiently to maintain supplies to Britain across the Atlantic for all practical purposes. If Sweden and Holland were brought into the blockade zone Germany would be cut off from these countries. The Maginot Line is said to be strong enough for months ahead to prevent any advance by the German army into France, and to free sufficient British and French troops for the danger zones in the north and south of France, and Belgium and Holland. While the Western Powers are thus able to remain for a considerable period on the defensive against the expected German onslaughts, Britain's war



potential would increase behind these fronts through the mobilization of all human, economic, and moral forces, which have so far only been organized in "shadow" or "skeleton" form in case of war, and which, in view of the British mentality, can only be fully mobilized under pressure of actual events. By contrast, it is said, Germany and Italy have already reached the peak of their capacity, which in wartime could be increased only relatively little and would, rather, very soon decline for lack of raw materials. The optimism displayed in Britain today regarding their own military capacity and the staying powers of the civilian population is, in fact, one of the most striking and significant phenomena. Large scale destruction by bombers of industrial centres and towns in Britain is fully expected, but this is not regarded as a decisive factor as long as enemy forces do not succeed in carrying the land war into Britain. This is considered out of the question.

The confident slogan, "Britain may not be able to win the war but she certainly cannot lose it", is a typical maxim indicating a reserve of strength, intended to form a contrast to "bombastic exaggerations". It is thought that in this way, not only the British people but also a large part of the English-speaking world could be, so to speak, immunized against German, Italian and Japanese propaganda.

Thus, whereas they are prepared to wage a bloodless war for months on end with the utmost vigour, they think, at the moment, that they can count on America and other countries, at least as regards moral and economic support. Irrespective of all loss of prestige in the Far East, Tientsin is quoted as an impressive example of the hard kicks which Great Britain can stand without losing her nerve or being diverted from the general principles of her foreign policy. "The main front will always be in Europe. All other enemies of the Empire take second place."

Propaganda. The organization of the Publicity Department of the Foreign Office<sup>4</sup> is to be regarded as a mobilization of the fourth arm for the bloodless war in which Britain considers herself to be engaged. The new department is neither a press bureau, nor is its primary purpose to serve the press, but is staffed by purely political Foreign Office officials. Its task is to put over to foreign countries, by the best possible means of propaganda, the various points of British foreign policy and to hammer them into the minds of the people, thus giving direct support to Britain's foreign policy. As in the World War, the Department is divided into countries and groups of countries. Slogans such as "the German encirclement lie" and "Italy in Germany's clutches" are carefully rendered into other languages and passed through the appropriate channels with a view to their becoming firmly established anti-

<sup>4</sup> A Foreign Publicity Department of the Foreign Office had been announced, on June 15, 1939, as having been set up, under the supervision of Lord Perth. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 348, cols. 1499-1503.

German concepts throughout the world. Lord Perth, the Director of the Publicity Department, was chosen as the final authority chiefly to smooth out the numerous differences of opinion. Sir Robert Vansittart, as head of the committee dealing with all home and foreign propaganda of the Foreign Office,<sup>5</sup> undoubtedly remains the *Spiritus Rector*. The Ministry of Information now being built up as a shadow ministry to come into operation only in the event of war, and which has been entrusted to the Home Secretary, Hoare, is also under the direction of Lord Perth. A minister will only be appointed for it if war breaks out, as only then could the British press be subjected to censorship or compulsory measures. The Press and Information Departments for the British newspapers remain as they are, as do the British Council's powers to influence radio, films, literature and cultural propaganda abroad. Lord Beaverbrook,<sup>6</sup> who played an important part in the Ministry of Information during the World War, emphasizes that the most important task of propaganda work comes at the moment when war breaks out. To be effective it must be striking and violent, like the writing on the wall. At the same time secret underground propaganda must be carried out in foreign countries. In this way it is hoped to raise the spirits and morale of their own people and lower those of the enemy. Lord Beaverbrook proposes that the propaganda machinery be set up as in time of war and that, so far as possible, it be put in the hands, not of civil servants, but of people of outstanding talent from public life, such as in the past Lord Northcliffe,<sup>7</sup> Cunliffe-Owen,<sup>8</sup> Raymond Needham<sup>9</sup> and their assistants from the ranks of authors, journalists, and other liberal professions.

HANS SELIGO

<sup>5</sup> Sir Robert Vansittart, Chief Diplomatic Adviser to the Foreign Secretary, was head of a committee coordinating foreign publicity; its duties were later taken over by the newly formed Foreign Publicity Department. See *Parl. Deb., loc. cit.*, col. 1829.

<sup>6</sup> Lord Beaverbrook had been Minister of Information in 1918.

<sup>7</sup> Lord Northcliffe had been Director of Propaganda in Enemy Countries in 1918.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Hugo Cunliffe-Owen, an industrialist, served in the Ministry of Information during the First World War.

<sup>9</sup> Private Secretary to the Minister of Information during the First World War.

## No. 631

FI/0289-90

*Ambassador Attolico to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

Strictly for personal attention  
N 5044

BERLIN, July 7, 1939.

DEAR REICH MINISTER: I did not fail to submit at once to Rome, with due care and precision, the views which you gave me over the telephone

this morning<sup>1</sup> regarding the communiqué, of which you are aware,<sup>2</sup> on the subject of the Alto Adige territory.

I have, however, just now received a telephonic communication from my Minister instructing me to ask you if you would be so good as to examine the matter once more on the lines of the formula which I sent to Weizsäcker today.<sup>3</sup>

As can be seen from the formula, the main purpose of the communiqué is to underline the *voluntary* character—not compulsory, as is said abroad—of the migration in question. This is all the more desirable as the French and British are trying to make capital out of this new fact, too, by seeking to read into it, not a sign of a further strengthening of our relations, but proof of the delicate state of these very relations.

In view of the above my Minister hopes that you will approve the publication of the communiqué in question before he leaves for Spain.<sup>4</sup>

It is unnecessary for me to add to my statement to Your Excellency how very pleased I, for my part, should be to see my Minister's wish fulfilled.

I should be grateful if before leaving Berlin you would also settle this small matter, and I remain, Your Excellency, with cordial greetings and best wishes for your holiday.<sup>5</sup>

Yours etc.,

B. ATTOLICO

<sup>1</sup> No German record of this telephone conversation has been found. See *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 493.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 624.

<sup>3</sup> On July 7 Attolico addressed a letter to Weizsäcker (584/242354) which read:

"With reference to our conversation with Reichsführer Himmler yesterday evening, I should like to inform you that I was rung up from Rome this morning.

"It was explained to me that in view of the incorrect assumptions and assertions which have recently appeared in the press of certain foreign countries, the Duce considers the publication of a brief communiqué on migration from the Alto Adige region to be absolutely necessary.

"This communiqué might, it is thought in Rome, run more or less as follows:

"Both Governments have decided to facilitate the departure from the Italian province of Bolzano of German nationals and those persons of a different race who have acquired German nationality and wish to return to the Reich of their own free will.

"Special offices have therefore been opened at Bolzano, Merano, Vipiteno, Brunico and Bressanone which have been directed to deal with matters appertaining thereto."

"I should be grateful if you would inform me of the decision taken on this."

<sup>4</sup> Ciano left for Spain on July 9; see the *Ciano Diaries*, entry of that date.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Has been settled. To be filed (Minister's Secretariat). W[eizsäcker] 11/7."

## No. 632

5555/E395351-52

### *The Legation in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 291 of July 8

BUCHAREST, July 8, 1939—10:45 p.m.

Received July 9—3:30 a.m.

W 1070 g.

With reference to my telegram No. 285.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 621.

I. The Protocols on deliveries of war material<sup>2</sup> and aircraft<sup>3</sup> have been signed. The latter is subject to the approval of the Reich Ministry for Air. The revolving credit has been dropped.<sup>4</sup> In return for the aircraft deliveries, petroleum only will be supplied, and the Rumanian Government have agreed to make advance deliveries of 12 million [RM worth] in the second half of 1939 and 6 million [RM worth] in the first quarter of 1940. Therefore taken together with a payment of an instalment of 12 million [RM] we can obtain an additional 30 million [RM worth] of petroleum up to January 1940. The Reichspost contract for the reconstruction of the teleprinter network has also been signed.

II. Discussions with the King, the Minister President, the Minister of Economics and numerous other Ministers confirm in general Rumania's favourable attitude towards German-Rumanian collaboration. However, there is still unmistakable anxiety in some quarters here, lest Rumania become too dependent on Germany economically, and there is a desire to develop trade with free currency countries in particular. Nor are the Rumanian Government, for this reason, prepared to conclude, as yet, a firm agreement on grain supplies because, while the harvest yield is still uncertain, they fear that they may possibly not have enough for supplying other countries. Decisions on questions of grain, rates of exchange, and petroleum and current German exports are to be made at the session of the Government Committees beginning on September 15. Rumania recognizes in general that the disproportion between the value of the Reich mark and that of the so-called "free currency" must be removed, but still emphatically refuses to do this by increasing the rate of exchange.<sup>5</sup>

III. Early promulgation of the Mines Law has been promised. The text is to be supplied to us in advance. Bujoiu, and in particular the Minister President, assured me that they would do everything necessary to enable Socop and also Mirafor<sup>6</sup> to start work as soon as possible.

IV. It is considered by the Minister President, the Minister of Economics, the Finance Minister and the new confidential adviser of

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 638.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7895/E573172-77); it is entitled *Protocole pour le matériel aéronautique à commander en Allemagne dans le cadre de la Convention roumaino-allemande du 23 mars, 1939* (text in French) and was signed by a representative of the Rumanian Ministry for Air and Marine and representatives of the German aircraft industry.

<sup>4</sup> According to a despatch from Fabricius dated July 14 (not printed, 5555/E395378-79) the Rumanians had reverted to the question of a revolving credit. In a letter to the Ministry of Economics dated July 29 (not printed, 5555/E395380-81) Clodius took the view that if the Rumanians pressed it during the September meeting of the Government Committees (see para. II of the document here printed) it would probably have to be granted.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 337, and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> Under an agreement signed on June 20 (not printed, 8449/E594908-17) between representatives of German petroleum firms, including Mirafor, and Rumanian petroleum interests, the Rumanian Socop (Societatea pentru Comerțul Petrolului) was to be re-organized as a joint German-Rumanian undertaking. The agreement was made subject to the approval of the German Government and of the Rumanian National Bank, and was dependent on a new Rumanian Law on Mines.

the Rumanian group in the Cancicov Bank of Credit that now is the right moment for active resumption of negotiations between the Deutsche Bank and the Rumanian group. All the above Ministers promised wholehearted support, but pointed out that in the last resort the settlement was the private affair of the parties concerned.

I consider that the prospects for this are by no means assured yet and recommend greatest expedition.

V. I shall report orally on all other particular questions. I am arriving in Sofia on Monday.<sup>7</sup>

CLODIUS

<sup>7</sup> i.e., July 10.

### No. 633

169/82644-45

#### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 254

BERLIN, July 8, 1939.<sup>1</sup>  
zu Pol. IV . . . . .

With reference to your telegram No. 286.<sup>2</sup>

Neither in *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* nor in other comments published on the occasion of the Bulgarian visit<sup>3</sup> is any mention made of the Dobruja question. *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* of July 4 speaks of aspirations of the Bulgarian people, "the justice of which has been recognized to some extent even by outsiders, and in fact by opponents, inasmuch as they are constantly discussing the possibilities and conditions of the fulfilment of such aspirations". This is an allusion to the well-known fact that not we, but Britain, Turkey, the Soviet Union, and probably other Powers as well, have tried to persuade Rumania to make concessions to Bulgaria in the Dobruja question. Please, therefore, point out very clearly that the complaint is addressed to the wrong quarter. If the conclusion of the economic agreements under reference can be influenced by such deceptions Rumanian loyalty must be at a low ebb.

As regards the attitude taken by this Ministry to Bulgaria's revisionist claims, see our despatch of June 9 Pol. IV 3453<sup>4</sup> to which nothing can be added as a result of the Bulgarian Minister's visit.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 625.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 617 and 618.

<sup>4</sup> The copy sent to Bucharest of document No. 476.

## No. 634

168/132399-400

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Spain*

Telegram

No. 457

BERLIN, July 8, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

c.o. Protocol St. 00971 V 30-192 F.

For the Ambassador personally.

Please take the earliest opportunity to state that a visit by General Franco to Germany would be very welcome and that we should be very glad if he would bring the Foreign Minister, Jordana, with him. For this—as discussed with the Reich Foreign Minister—it would have to be left to General Franco to propose a date, so that an official invitation from the Führer could then be sent to him. We gather that General Franco has already accepted an invitation to go to Italy and that September is mentioned as a likely date. We wish to give Italy precedence in this matter. It is therefore presumed that the visit cannot take place until the late autumn, which would also be convenient to us.

Prince Hohenlohe<sup>2</sup> has in the meantime conveyed to us Serrano Suñer's wish, mentioned in your private letter of June 25<sup>3</sup> and also in reports from Ambassador von Mackensen,<sup>4</sup> to receive an invitation to visit Germany. Please state that a visit by Suñer would also be welcome here. We will inform you later in whose name the invitation is to be extended. The visit could not take place before the second half of September. The date would have to be so arranged as to allow a certain interval between his visit and that of Franco. If Franco were to come as soon as September or October, then Suñer's visit would have to follow Franco's.<sup>5</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Max zu Hohenlohe-Langenburg.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 525.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 670 of July 12 (not printed, 168/132398) Stohrer replied that he had transmitted this invitation to the Foreign Minister. He had further discussed it with Ciano and Suñer, the latter proposing that Franco should visit Germany immediately after his Italian visit, which was expected to be between September 20-30. In a further telegram, No. 684 of July 15 (not printed, 168/132397), Stohrer reported Franco's personal acceptance.

## No. 635

97/108413

*The Office of the Wehrmacht Adjutants attached to the Führer and Chancellor to the High Command of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERCHTESGADEN, July 8, 1939.

Br. B.N. 19N/39 g. Kdos

To High Command of the Navy—Naval Command Office.

Foreign Ministry—Counsellor von der Heyden-Rynsch, Berlin, (for information only)<sup>1</sup>Reference: OKM communication B. No. 1 Skl. 1276/39 g. Kdos. of July 4, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

Subject: Visit to the port of Danzig.

The Führer has decided, in the matter under reference, that the announcement of the naval visit shall not be made till shortly before the date and shall be in the form of a mere notification to Warsaw while the actual formal announcement will be made to the Danzig Senate.

It is the Führer's wish that he should again be consulted before the formal announcement is made.

Furthermore the Führer has reserved the right to decide whether the fleet should carry out the visit in the strength mentioned in the communication under reference or whether the two capital ships should not take part in the visit.

It is requested that the Führer's final decision on the strength of the fleet for the visit and on the formal announcement be obtained shortly before the actual date.

By order:  
signature.  
Captain

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Siegfried's handwriting "Original to the Foreign Minister 10.7.39."

<sup>2</sup> Not found, but see document No. 558.

## No. 636

118/86440-42

*Minute by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 8, 1939.

On the occasion of the reception for the Bulgarian Minister President, Kiosseivanov, the Reich Foreign Minister gave Ambassador Attolico the following information:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On July 6. For Attolico's record of this conversation see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 503 and 504.

1) Reports of German intentions to stage a *putsch* in Danzig were untrue. There was no German plot to engineer a solution of the Danzig question.

2) Should Poland occupy Danzig territory the German army would immediately march on Poland, as M. Beck had already been told some time ago.

3) The Führer was watching the situation as regards Poland with calm detachment and attention. He did not intend to start a war with Poland of his own accord. If Poland became reasonable, there would be possibilities of settling the present difficulties; should Poland continue to behave as hitherto and intolerable provocation result, Poland would be smashed.

4) The Führer was of course interested, as was Italy, that a general European conflict should not be fomented by the Polish question.

Here the Foreign Minister referred to the series of bluffs recently started up again by Great Britain and France. To a question by Attolico whether Germany would take any action against Poland on account of Danzig before the meeting between the Führer and Mussolini, the Foreign Minister replied that Germany had no such programme, unless Poland gave intolerable provocation. He pointed out moreover, that Danzig, with the help of the Danzigers, was so strongly armed and fortified that it could withstand any difficulty arising out of possible attacks by Polish bands.<sup>2</sup>

R[IBBENTROP]

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "To be filed as secret. Not for distribution. E. K[ordt] 9/7."

## No. 637

3039/600800

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 545

BERLIN, July 8, 1939.

Pol. IV 4094.

As the Yugoslav Minister,<sup>1</sup> when he visited me today, again made some remarks defending the Balkan Entente as a factor for neutrality, I expressed my disagreement very clearly to him and told him that Yugoslavia would compromise herself if she did not unequivocally dissociate herself from the Balkan Entente, which, indeed, had in reality already broken up.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Ivo Andrić.



## No. 638

2104/455689-70

*Secret Protocol between Germany and Rumania*<sup>1</sup>

## SECRET

The following is agreed between the German Government and the Royal Rumanian Government:

## I

The competent Rumanian authorities may place orders with German firms for the delivery of war material within the limits of the commercial credits provided for in the Protocol of Signature (Article I, paragraphs 7 to 9) of the Treaty of March 23, 1939, for the Promotion of Economic Relations between the German Reich and the Kingdom of Rumania<sup>2</sup> under the following conditions:

1. The period of the credits to be granted will, according to the nature of the war material ordered and the delivery period, be three to seven years from the date on which the order is placed.

2. An instalment of 20 per cent will be paid when the order is placed. Payment of the balance will be guaranteed by the Rumanian State. When the order is placed, the Ministry of Finance will provide 5 per cent Treasury Bonds for this balance, the export of which to Germany is permitted.

The Rumanian Government will, at their earliest convenience, send a representative of the Rumanian Ministry of Finance to Berlin to agree upon the terms of the Treasury Bonds.

Moreover the details of the conditions of payment will be incorporated in the various contracts.

3. The transfer of the payments to be made by the Rumanian Government against these credits shall be effected in accordance with the provisions in Section 15 of the Confidential Protocol of Dec. 10, 1938,<sup>3</sup> on the conclusion of the fourth joint session of the German and Rumanian Government Committees.

Done at Bucharest in duplicate in the German and Rumanian languages, both texts being equally authentic, on July 8, 1939.

CARL CLODIUS

I. BUJOIU

<sup>1</sup> The texts of the document here printed and also of document No. 639 are taken from mimeographed copies. The originals, which were sent to Berlin under cover of report No. 356 of Jan. 19, 1940 (not printed, 5556/E395493), are not held.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 78.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7182/E527329-88).

## No. 639

2104/455671

*The Rumanian Minister of Economics to Minister Clodius*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

BUCHAREST, July 8, 1939.

SIR: I acknowledge receipt of your esteemed communication of even date,<sup>2</sup> of the following content:

"With reference to our discussion today I have the honour of confirming to you that pursuant to section 15 of the Confidential Protocol of December 10, 1938<sup>3</sup> on the fourth joint session of the German and Rumanian Government Committees, it has been agreed that the full equivalent of the materials for air rearmament<sup>4</sup> as well as rights thereto, to be supplied under contracts signed today, shall be met by additional deliveries of petroleum.

I also thank you for your readiness to allow, in anticipation of the quantities of petroleum due to be supplied later under the Protocol, the export of additional quantities of petroleum in such a manner that, for the first three instalments, which fall due on April 1, 1940, October 1, 1940 and April 1, 1941, respectively, 6 million RM worth of petroleum products may be exported in the second half of 1939, and also in the first and second quarters of 1940."

Herewith I send you the Rumanian translation of this letter and would inform you that the Rumanian Government are in agreement with the contents thereof.

Please accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration.

I. BUJOIU

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 638, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7182/E527329-88).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed; see document No. 632, footnote 3.

## No. 640

21/119527-29

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 305

BERLIN, July 9, 1939.<sup>1</sup>  
e.o. RAM 293.

For the Ambassador.

The measure taken by the French Government in denying Herr

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<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

Abetz entry into France until further notice<sup>2</sup> calls for a speedy, energetic and successful *démarche*. I have no intention whatever of accepting this action by the French Government and intend to send Herr Abetz back to France in the near future.

I therefore request you to seek a personal interview with M. Daladier, and to obtain through him permission for Herr Abetz to re-enter the country at the earliest possible moment. I request you to hold such language as will make a refusal of your request impossible from the start and not in any way make this permission appear a special favour.

To this end I should wish you to speak somewhat in the following terms, without making it appear as instructions from me:

Herr Abetz was, as you knew, a friend of the Reich Foreign Minister and had been for many years his collaborator in his tenacious pursuit of understanding between Germany and France. As a private individual, Abetz had always striven completely selflessly for that ideal of understanding, had helped in difficult situations, and had contributed to setting Franco-German relations on an even keel. Abetz was known to many personages in France for these activities of his. In Germany too, Abetz had been working to the same end. Franco-German friendship was his life's ambition.

After Abetz had recently been in Paris and had then returned here, the Embassy had been informed that Abetz was to be expelled. The Embassy had reported this to Berlin and was awaiting an answer from the Reich Foreign Minister. You yourself, however, considered the proposed measure to be an impossible one. You could not believe that the agitation of certain warmongers in France had gained such influence over the Government as to ban a man like Abetz from Paris because he was working unswervingly for the improvement of Franco-German relations. The reason given for Abetz's expulsion from France was completely fictitious and absurd. You could not imagine that the French Government wanted to force the German Government to resort to measures on their side which would amount to breaking up the private work for understanding between the two countries. The French Government should really think of the effect which such a German *riposte* would have on public opinion. Daladier would therefore be

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<sup>2</sup> Otto Abetz, Paris representative of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop, had left France on July 2. An unsigned memorandum dated July 19 (not printed, 1570/380044-49) reviewing the case on the basis of reports from the Paris Embassy (which have not been found) and the French press, states that, on June 30, Bonnet's *Chef de Cabinet*, Bressy, had told Bräuer, Counsellor of the German Embassy in Paris, that Daladier had recently been compelled to issue an expulsion order against Abetz, on account of his political activities. Bonnet attached great importance to the order not being executed, and therefore proposed that it might be suggested to Abetz to leave France. Bressy had stated that the grounds for the expulsion order were that Abetz had been making sensational statements to various prominent French persons about an imminent German *coup* in Danzig. The systematic spreading of such rumours contravened the latest decrees forbidding such propaganda. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 186.

well advised to deal personally with the matter at once, before it led to further deterioration.

I request you on this occasion not to take up with Daladier the subject of general politics. If Daladier should turn to it of his own accord, you should tell him very seriously that you recently forwarded a memorandum from M. Bonnet to me.<sup>3</sup> You were awaiting instructions on Bonnet's communication, which would doubtless occasion an unmistakable reaction in Berlin. But you would not wish to go into this at present.

For the rest, I request you to adhere to the instructions in telegram No. 286 of June 30.<sup>4</sup>

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 602.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 592.

### No. 641

73/51919

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 547

BERLIN, July 9, 1939.

The Foreign Minister is in favour of joint preparatory work between Germany and Hungary for war economy. We should therefore reply to the Hungarians<sup>1</sup> to the effect that we would get in touch with them in due course. We should not, however, start on the actual work until we have had the first discussion with General Cavallero in the German-Italian War Economy Commission. I have so far only made a brief remark to the Italian Ambassador about the Hungarian request and told him that we do not wish to accept Hungary as a third party to the German-Italian Commission. It will be necessary to acquaint Herr von Mackensen with the matter and send a written answer to the Hungarian Minister in Berlin.<sup>2</sup>

Herewith submitted through the Under State Secretary, Political Department, and the Director of the Economic Policy Department to Ambassador Ritter.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 578.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of July 10 (2140/468106) Woermann recorded that the Hungarian Minister in Berlin had raised this subject with him and stated that General Werth (Chief of the Hungarian General Staff) had discussed it with von Brauchitsch and other German military authorities, who had been sympathetic; the Minister hoped this would not lead to a misunderstanding with the Foreign Ministry as the competent authority. Woermann had assured him that the Foreign Ministry would deal with the proposal in due course.

## No. 642

103/111476

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 130 of July 10

Moscow, July 10, 1939—5:56 p.m.

Received July 10—5:50 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 142 of July 7.<sup>1</sup>

Instructions carried out. Mikoyan received the information with obvious interest and stated that he would inform his Government and give a reply as soon as possible.

SCHULENBURG

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 628.

## No. 643

584/242318

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy and the Consulate General at Milan*

Telegram

To Rome No. 333

BERLIN, July 10, 1939—7:50 p.m.

To Milan No. 14

e.o. Pol. IV 4058.

For the Ambassador (Consul General) personally.

1) It is not intended here to publish anything in the press about the South Tyrol resettlement operation. Attolico has been requested today to ensure that nothing about it is published in the Italian press either.<sup>1</sup>

2) If conversations with people not concerned in the operation, in particular foreigners from third countries, cannot be avoided please point out that for some time now migration has been in progress from South Tyrol of *Reich Germans*, especially former Austrians, and that by mutual consent *this* migration is now being directed into proper channels.

3) Also, discussions with people concerned in the operation should,

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<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum, St.S. No. 553 of July 10 (not printed, 584/242319), Weizsäcker recorded that, on instructions, he had informed Attolico that Ribbentrop after re-examining the question of publishing anything on the migration operation in the South Tyrol requested that the matter should not be referred to in any way in the press. See also document No. 631.

for the present, refer only to the category of Reich Germans mentioned in paragraph (2) above.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> In a supplementary telegram sent for information to Rome (No. 335) and to Milan (No. 15) on July 11 (584/242320-21) Weizsäcker wrote: "The instructions in the preceding telegram for treatment of the South Tyrol question in the press and conversations, do not involve any material change of the proposed programme. Our view is, however, that any public discussion of the subject merely provides material for hostile propaganda. This is confirmed by the treatment of the news in the world press which draws, for instance, nonsensical parallels with Danzig. [In addition to this, the resettlement operation for *Volksdeutsche* who are attached to the land [*bodengebunden*] can only be realized if the preliminary conditions therefor are created by the provision of appropriate settlement land, so that a comparatively long waiting period is to be reckoned with.]" The sentence in square brackets was deleted before despatch. In a circular despatch Pol. IV 1573 g. of July 13 (not printed, 2927/566824-25) the heads of the main German Missions in Europe and Washington were informed, for strictly personal information, of the substance of document No. 562, the document here printed, and the telegram quoted above including the sentence in square brackets.

## No. 644

610/248221

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Slovakia*

Telegram

No. 103

BERLIN, July 10, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Counsellor  
von der Heyden-Rynsch.

e.o. Pol. I 747 g. Rs.

With reference to the oral discussion with Consul General Druffel and despatch Pol. I 671 g. Rs.,<sup>2</sup> and telegram No. 101.<sup>3</sup>

Please ensure that the Slovak Government grant all necessary facilities in agreement with the competent German military authorities for the execution of the field works to be undertaken by a German division, as from August 5, in the Žilina-Jablunkow-Uhroscia area. Where, in implementation of our rights under Article 2 of the Treaty of Protection,<sup>4</sup> certain temporary measures are required outside the protected zone, we are entitled under Article 2 to take them, or to be permitted to do so. Requirements which cannot be brought under Article 2 must be effected by means of Article 3.

It is left to your discretion whether or not to inform the Slovak

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (350/202166-67). This document is a copy of a minute, dated June 20, recording Hitler's decision about four points on Slovakia which had been reported at a conference held by Keitel. Points 1, 2 and 4 dealt with military matters; point 3 read as follows: "The Führer said that he wished the negotiations to be conducted energetically and resolutely which, together with our concrete offers, *must* lead to early success. The prerequisite for the proposed support of Slovakia is the complete acceptance of our demands, the more so as Slovakia is dependent on our military, economic and financial aid."

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 40.

Government, as and when opportunity occurs, that, as we have already stated several times, we are prepared to send a German military mission to build up the Slovak army after the conclusion of the treaties now under discussion, and especially the Zone of Protection treaty. However, it is a prerequisite that the matters at present under negotiation shall have been fully clarified.

WOERMANN

No. 645

259/109645-48

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2718

LONDON, July 10, 1939.

POLITICAL REPORT

With reference to my telegram No. 227 of July 3.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Stiffening of British morale.

The campaign of incitement (of which the causes and aims are described in my telegram under reference) about a *coup* against Danzig allegedly planned by Germany, collapsed after a few days through its mendacity. As to the technique of press politics, by means of which this manoeuvre was staged, I would refer to the statements of Press Adviser Dr. Hesse<sup>2</sup> of July 3: "Observations on press politics in respect of the Danzig crisis", submitted with report No. A 2616 of July 4.<sup>3</sup>

Herewith this fresh chapter in our enemies' attempts to involve Germany in a world war could have been considered closed, but the last few days have revealed a state of British public opinion which deserves serious attention.

A number of different factors, namely, the Government's encirclement action against Germany, rearmament propaganda, the introduction of compulsory military service, the air-raid protection organization and, above all, the flood of anti-German propaganda in the press, cinema, theatre and radio, have induced in the British public, prone as it is to emotional reactions, a mood in which the idea "war" is the central point in thinking and talking. Different shades of opinion exist only in the answers given to the question, "Is war inevitable or not?" The majority of average Britons instinctively answer, "Yes" to this question. A more thoughtful minority reply in the negative, recognizing that in Anglo-German relations all disputed issues must be capable of solution given good will, and that even a victorious war would

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 606.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Fritz Hesse, London correspondent of the DNB and, from 1935, Press Adviser to the German Embassy in London.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

benefit no one. But even these, on the whole level-headed, circles are influenced by their knowledge of the measures taken by the British armed forces, i.e., that the fleet is to be ready by the end of July, and that military training and organizational measures are directed to the same date. The same effect is produced by press reports, and reports by agents which are manifestly in the hands of the competent authorities, on German intentions to take military measures in August. At any rate, even responsible and thoughtful people regard August as a time of first class crisis.

The attitude towards the conception of "war" varies. A small section of the British public displays a mentality which strikes one as hysterical; these people believe every sensational story, they call for Polish and Russian help and weaken the Government's tactical position in the negotiations with Russia. But the majority take a more manly attitude and think: "if war is inevitable we will wage it with resolution, and the sooner the better so that we can get the business over and return to more settled conditions". The press reports from Germany stating that the Führer has returned to Berchtesgaden, that the Reich Foreign Minister and Colonel General von Brauchitsch have gone on leave, and that the holiday period has started, have not done much to soothe the prevailing excitement.

Summing up it can be said that antagonism to Germany is on the increase; that the readiness to fight has hardened; that the feeling has gained ground: "We must not put up with any more of this. Our honour is at stake; we must fight; the Government must not give way." Reports of German press comments on British decadence and lack of fighting spirit have contributed largely to this frame of mind.

The decisive difference between Britain's mood in the autumn of 1938 and now is, that then the broad masses of the people did not want to fight and were passive, while now they have taken over the initiative from the Government and drive the Cabinet on. However unfounded and dangerous is this attitude of the British public, nevertheless it must be taken fully into account as a very real factor, the more so in a country where public opinion plays as decisive a part as it does in Britain.

It would be wrong to conclude from this estimate of "public opinion"<sup>4</sup> that Great Britain is now irrevocably heading for war. The wave of excitement will subside even as it arose, once the necessary conditions are there. The most important condition would be a calmer atmosphere in Britain, which would make a more unbiased examination of the German point of view possible. There are some signs of this. Within the Cabinet, and in a small but influential group of politicians, efforts are being made to replace the negative policy of an encirclement front

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.



by a constructive policy towards Germany (cf. report No. A 2492 of June 6 [sic]).<sup>5</sup> Though there are strong forces at work to stifle this very tender plant—among which may be numbered the press campaign of last weekend—nevertheless Chamberlain's personality gives a certain guarantee that British policy will not be delivered into the hands of unscrupulous adventurers.<sup>6</sup>

VON DIRKSEN

<sup>5</sup> Evidently in error for June 24. See document No. 564.

<sup>6</sup> Handwritten marginal note: "Submitted to the Foreign Minister on 14. VII."

## No. 646

1625/389101

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 554

BERLIN, July 10, 1939.  
Pol. II 2509.

After hearing a report on the enclosed memorandum<sup>1</sup> the Foreign Minister has again stated that, at every suitable opportunity, we should stiffen the attitude of the countries affected by the British Government's encirclement and guarantee action. First, direct representations should again be made to Switzerland, whose recent statements had not been entirely satisfactory.

I should be grateful if you would let me have the relevant Swiss statements<sup>2</sup> so that I can make a few observations on them to the Swiss Minister here, as Minister Köcher has already spoken to the Federal Councillor in Berne.

Herewith to the Under State Secretary, Political Department.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7891/E571483-89). This undated memorandum summarizes the reports from German Missions in reply to the Weizsäcker circular telegram of March 21 (document No. 58).

<sup>2</sup> A memorandum on Swiss statements about the British Government's guarantee action (not printed, 1625/389102) was submitted to Weizsäcker under cover of a note by Marschall, an official of Political Division II, dated July 12 (not printed, 7891/E571491). In it was quoted the last paragraph of Berne telegram No. 43 of Apr. 11 (document No. 181) and reference made to the instructions sent to Berne on May 15 and Köcher's reply of May 24 (document No. 384 and footnote 7 thereto), and a report from the Legation in Berne of July 6 (not found). See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 498.

## No. 647

7249/E532089

### *Minute by the Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Danzig Senate*

DANZIG, July 10, 1939.

I. I had a conversation with the High Commissioner, Professor

Burckhardt, the day after his return.<sup>1</sup> At that time he stated that he regarded the situation more optimistically than at the time of his departure in February. If one only waited patiently until next February everything would fall into Germany's lap like a ripe plum.

II. On July 8, I again had a conversation with Professor Burckhardt. This time he told me that the situation looked somewhat more favourable than three weeks ago. The world was gradually getting tired of alarmist reports from Danzig. The opinions of the nations often changed quickly. The solution of the Danzig problem was not urgent. Germany could not but stand to gain if she knew how to wait patiently.

One had the impression that Britain was at present somewhat tagging along behind France, but was only reluctantly yielding to France's wishes. Britain was obviously exerting strong pressure on Poland not to embark arbitrarily on any action.

The Gauleiter had recently sent Herr Zarske<sup>2</sup> to him. Herr Zarske had wanted to induce him to give an interview to an American radio company. Herr Zarske had said, amongst other things, that soon he would not be working as a journalist any more, but that bigger political tasks would be entrusted to him.

Submitted to President Greiser for his information.

VIKTOR BÖTTCHER

<sup>1</sup> The High Commissioner returned to Danzig on June 23. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Editor of the *Danziger Vorposten*.

## No. 648

276/178565-67

*Ambassador Schulenburg to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

[Moscow], July 10, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: So far I have heard nothing from Herr von Tappelskirch<sup>1</sup> and do not know whether he has succeeded in seeing you and telling you how right in my opinion are the instructions<sup>2</sup> to do nothing further for the time being with M. Molotov about normalization of our relations with the Soviet Union. I believe that any hasty action would only be harmful and make the Russians shy off. Nevertheless we must and can do something. As for one reason or another it is not at present possible to do "great things" we must limit ourselves to "small things". Experience shows that it is not treaties and agreements which create a good or a bad atmosphere in international intercourse, but the way everyday things are handled. In this respect a wide field for activity is offered to us, though less here in Moscow

<sup>1</sup> Tappelskirch was on leave in Germany. See document No. 661.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 588.

where our freedom of movement is very restricted, than with you in Berlin. I think the Russians would be very pleased and would take it as a proof of our good will if their Embassy in Berlin, the Soviet Military Attaché etc., were treated in a slightly more friendly way. I admit that here we are very isolated, but that applies not only to the German Embassy but to the whole Diplomatic Corps, and is in line with the Soviet Russians' well-known nervousness and suspicion. Incidentally, conditions in Iran are very similar.<sup>3</sup> There, too, the natives are not allowed to mix with the foreign diplomats, nevertheless we do not pay back the Iranian Minister in Berlin in like coin.

There will certainly often be other opportunities in Berlin of obliging the Soviet Russians and thereby proving our good will to them. I believe it would serve our purpose if we grasped every such opportunity and turned it to good account. Here we notice already a slight easement in the Soviets' behaviour towards us.

The negotiations here by the British and French have still not led to any result. So far, our British colleagues have maintained an iron silence about the negotiations. Yesterday for the first time they showed signs of impatience. This morning's Soviet communiqué, which we have reported by telegram,<sup>4</sup> justifies their ill humour.

I think the Soviets are, *to say the least*, also infected by the rumours that August will be a specially critical month. Till then they will prefer not to commit themselves.

With most cordial greetings, and Heil Hitler!

I remain, dear Herr von Weizsäcker,

Yours etc.,

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

<sup>3</sup> Schulenburg had been Minister in Iran 1923-1931.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 127 of July 10 (not printed, 1625/389084); copies of the communiqués on the conversations of July 8 and 9 were forwarded to Berlin under report No. A 1478 of July 10 (not printed, 2770/536848-50).

## No. 649

2921/584311-14

*Consul General Wiedemann to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

SAN FRANCISCO, July 10, 1939.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: I am very much obliged to you for your letter of May 6,<sup>1</sup> and may venture to take this opportunity to explain certain things which have apparently troubled you. First: I keep clear of all politics and studiously avoid such conversations. Both Hoover<sup>2</sup> and Hearst<sup>3</sup> have approached me indirectly with a request to

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 340.

<sup>2</sup> President of the United States 1929-1933.

<sup>3</sup> William Randolph Hearst, editor and proprietor of the Hearst Press, a chain of U.S. newspapers and periodicals.

visit them. The formal invitation then fell through however because neither of them could at present risk having the German Consul General seen on their premises. The affair of the communist picket was as follows. My predecessor,<sup>4</sup> as you know, often had such a picket and was, I believe, more irritated by it than was necessary. So when, on the occasion of the march into Czecho-Slovakia, the first picket for me was announced, the whole town was curious and impatient to see how the new man would behave. If I had displayed vexation or something similar I should certainly have been paid such visits continually. The fact that I received these people caused considerable astonishment, and gave me a good start here, especially with the ordinary man in the street. I was repeatedly spoken to about it by Americans (waiters in restaurants) who said to me "that was very well done"<sup>5</sup> and added that the others were not fair in their attitude towards me. Nor, since then, have I had any more pickets. I feel that I acted rightly in this particular case. Naturally, receiving Communists has not become the practice here.

As to the general situation; the basic trend of developments will of course be known to you from the Embassy reports. Doubtless public opinion has further hardened against us. An adverse impression has been made, *inter alia*, by the Jewish ship that could not get rid of its passengers in Cuba<sup>6</sup> and the film *Confessions of a Nazi Spy*. At present many people are waiting to see how the Danzig question will be solved. For instance I was advised for the present to defer large scale invitations to important people.

On the other hand provocative headlines against us have disappeared from the newspapers for several weeks. The readers had had enough of Europe and wanted to read about something else for a change. I also have the impression that, at least in my district, the desire to intervene in a European conflict has markedly diminished.

The Jews here in San Francisco have become somewhat more cautious and reserved during the last few weeks. This is partly due to the uncertain business situation, and partly also to the recent strong Jewish influx which causes the fear of certain anti-Semitic repercussions.

There is not much fresh to report on *Volksdeutsch* and Reich German groups. My view that *Volksdeutsch* circles are not to be relied upon in times of crisis is strengthened by several new experiences. The following occurrence is characteristic. I have repeatedly lunched in a German restaurant. The proprietor attends all German functions. Time and again he spoke to me during meals. When, at one such moment, a

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<sup>4</sup> Manfred Freiherr von Killinger.

<sup>5</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>6</sup> In June, Jewish refugees from Germany on board the Hamburg-Amerika liner *St. Louis* had been refused admission to Cuba where they had hoped to stay whilst awaiting permission to enter the United States, and were forced to return to Hamburg.

press photographer wished to take a shot of me, the proprietor objected and said afterwards, "You will understand, Herr Consul General, I can't let myself be photographed with you, or I'd be boycotted at once" (which, incidentally, is not true). But such a nervous attitude towards the official representative of the Reich is *taken for granted* amongst the Germans here.

Nor were my experiences in Salt Lake City about which I have already reported<sup>7</sup> very pleasant. As, however, the press there reported my speech very well and very fairly, the unfavourable impression was obliterated, so that I believe a second appearance in Salt Lake City would pass without incident. The Mormons, too, showed themselves specially forthcoming and Germanophil. I was repeatedly assured that in them the Germans had very staunch supporters. However, in time of crisis, what I have said above would apply. The German group have erected a monument in the military cemetery of Salt Lake City for the Germans who died there during the war. The monument is in good condition and makes an impressive appearance. During ceremonies the American military authorities always detail a guard of honour.

Visits: The short visit of the German press representatives was a success which, as already reported, was first and foremost due to the confident and tactful behaviour of these gentlemen. Herr Beller, the director of the [German] Library of Information in New York, was also with the press representatives. I gained a *very* good impression of him and believe that it would be of advantage to encourage him where possible. A few weeks ago Freiherr von Gablenz, of the German Luft-hansa, passed through here. I am sorry that he did not stay longer. He is the type of person who knows how to deal with the Americans and whom they like. Although it only lasted half a day, this visit, too, was a success.

A week ago Consul General Walter and Admiral Foerster<sup>8</sup> were here in the wake of the Press Delegation. I got in touch with both gentlemen and entered, particularly with Walter, into detailed conversations on American problems. I believe that he may be able to supplement this report of mine with his own.

In this letter, I would also like to draw attention to the forthcoming visit of Albion Ross<sup>9</sup> to Berlin. He has an introduction from me to

<sup>7</sup> On June 26 Wiedemann wrote Weizsäcker a note (not printed, 8270/E588170) enclosing a copy of his report of the same date to the German Embassy in Washington (not printed, 8270/E588171-75) and stating that he had sent a copy to Hewel also. In his report he stated that as Hitler's former Adjutant he was widely believed to be charged with a secret mission and that he was being sharply attacked by three groups in particular, the Communists, the Jews and the fashionable "Burlingame Set". Enclosed with the report was a press cutting on a reception given at his house for German press representatives.

<sup>8</sup> See also document No. 619.

<sup>9</sup> An American journalist.

various gentlemen in the Foreign Ministry. I, of course, knew about his articles. He can't swim against the current. He has, however, when addressing influential people here, *repeatedly* and warmly advocated a just appreciation of German interests, and he deserves every encouragement.

I have already reported quite briefly on my personal position. The recent publicity has doubtless done me good. Interest in me has become still keener, which finds expression in the number of invitations and visits. In this connection I would like to draw special attention to the Konsultatssekretär, Wilhelm Wobker, formerly of San Francisco and now of Melbourne. He has apparently quite unusual social gifts. He was the favourite of the best society here. Whenever I meet people in the most influential circles here every second question is, "What about Wilhelm Wobker?"<sup>5</sup> I cannot judge of his official attainments, but I consider myself bound to point out to the Ministry his social gifts which, in certain circumstances, could be very usefully employed. For instance, Wobker once received an invitation from the famous Vanderbilt for a flight in the latter's private aeroplane.

Finally I would add that there was a letter here for Admiral Foerster from you. Through a regrettable oversight I did not deliver it. I did not know that we had a letter for the Admiral and my chief clerk did not know that Admiral Foerster passed through here, as he did not inform the Consulate, and I only met Admiral Foerster on the occasion of my meeting Consul General Walter in the hotel. I have given the letter to an official of the Consulate going to New York, so that the Admiral will certainly receive the letter, even though a week late.

With best compliments, I am,

Yours etc.,

F. WIEDEMANN

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[EDITORS' NOTE: On July 10, the British Prime Minister made a statement in the House of Commons referring to "recent occurrences in Danzig" which had "given rise to fears that it is intended to settle her future status by unilateral action, organized by surreptitious methods, thus presenting Poland and other Powers with a *fait accompli*". Should this happen, Chamberlain said: "the issue could not be considered as a purely local matter involving the rights and liberties of the Danzigers, which incidentally are in no way threatened, but would at once raise graver issues affecting Polish national existence and independence. We have guaranteed to give our assistance to Poland in the case of a clear threat to her independence, which she considers it vital to resist with her national forces, and we are firmly resolved to carry out this undertaking." For the full text of this statement see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 349, cols. 1787-1789.]

## No. 650

2993/586594

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 228 of July 11

WASHINGTON, July 11, 1939—11 p.m.

Received July 11—11 p.m. [sic].

Pol. IX 1521.

With reference to my telegram No. 219 of July 1.<sup>1</sup>

As the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has just adjourned discussion on the neutrality question until the next session, the provisions of the old Neutrality Act of April 29, 1937,<sup>2</sup> will remain in force for the present, i.e., principally:

1) If and when the President declares a state of war to exist, the export of arms, munitions and implements of war to belligerents is prohibited.

2) The "Cash and Carry"<sup>3</sup> clauses for raw materials, etc., no longer exist since May 1. American ships can, therefore, carry raw materials useful for war. The granting of credits to belligerents is, as heretofore, subject to the Johnson Act<sup>4</sup> and the prohibition provisions of Section 3 of the 1937 Law.<sup>5</sup> Lacking further Congressional support, the Government will put up with this defeat on a primarily domestic policy in the hope that, if a European war should break out, their views and desires will be carried in a special session of Congress which would then have to be called.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2993/586580-81). This telegram reported the passing by the House of Representatives on June 30 of the Bloom Bill but with restrictive amendments, which would have permitted shipment of implements of war, but would have retained the export embargo on arms and munitions.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 308.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> Of Apr. 13, 1934. See *United States Statutes at Large* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington), vol. 48, p. 574. This Act prohibited financial transactions with any foreign Government in default on its obligations to the United States.

<sup>5</sup> This section supplemented the provisions of the Johnson Act by forbidding financial transactions with belligerent States or any State wherein civil strife existed after the President had proclaimed the existence of a state of war.

## No. 651

1625/389098-99

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 257

BERLIN, July 11, 1939—7:30 p.m.

zu Pol. II 2337.<sup>1</sup>2507.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 287 of July 7.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 590.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 627.

Please inform the Foreign Minister at the earliest opportunity that there is no question of any deviation from the course discussed with him in Berlin. Of course the general situation in the Balkans has been altered by the fact that Turkey has openly gone over to the enemy's camp, and that Britain, France and Turkey are persisting in their attempts to carry Rumania with them. We, in contrast to other Powers friendly to her, have given Rumania no advice whatsoever in the Dobruja question, and have therefore been quite unable to understand why we are now pilloried in the Rumanian press, although we have not gone beyond showing understanding for certain Bulgarian desires. I refer you to *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* of July 8, where it is stated that this understanding was not at the expense of the fully appreciated interests of the countries with which Bulgaria shared her living space.

Please make clear to the Rumanian Government that our relations with Rumania are subject to no deviations which are not brought about by Rumania's own attitude, and that indeed we are closely watching that attitude.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 652

7693/E548452

*The Consul General at Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

DANZIG, July 11, 1939.

Received July 12.

Pol. V 6486.

With reference to my report No. 1180<sup>1</sup> of July 6.

Subject: Arrest of a Danzig Customs official in Tczew.

The Danzig Customs assistant Alfred Müller<sup>2</sup> has now been sentenced to eight months and two weeks imprisonment without postponement of sentence.

In the course of discussions which have started recently between the Senate of the Free City of Danzig and the P[olish] D[iplomatic] R[epresentation] here regarding the possibility of an exchange of Danzig citizens sentenced in Poland for Polish nationals imprisoned in Danzig, the question was discussed as to whether Müller could perhaps be exchanged for the Polish Customs Inspector Lipinski; my report No.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7693/E548448-49). It enclosed a Note dated July 3 from the Polish Diplomatic Representation (not printed, 7693/E548450-51) dealing with the arrest of Müller.

<sup>2</sup> According to a report of June 26, No. 1090, from the Consul General in Danzig (not printed, 7693/E548446) Müller was arrested on June 19 on a charge of slandering the Polish State and Polish officials.



976 of June 12, 1939,<sup>3</sup> refers to the Lipinski affair. The prosecution against Lipinski is to be expedited. After his expected sentence the question of his exchange for Müller will be further considered.<sup>4</sup>

JANSON

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7693/E548441). This report stated that the Polish Customs Inspector Lipinski had tried to subvert two Danzig SA men and had made insulting remarks about Hitler and Goebbels.

<sup>4</sup> The incidents referred to in footnotes 2 and 3 and other incidents were the subject of an exchange of Notes between the Danzig Senate and the Polish Diplomatic Representation (not printed, 7693/E548442-43; 7693/E548447).

### No. 653

2768/536269

#### *Counsellor Hensel to Senior Counsellor Grundherr*

S. NSchl. 500

COPENHAGEN, July 11, 1939.

Received July 13.

Pol. VI 1758.

DEAR HERR VON GRUNDHERR: With reference to the Minister's letter to you of July 1, No. 248 B,<sup>1</sup> about Dr. Möller's Knivsberg speech, I venture to communicate to you today, at the suggestion of Herr von Renthe-Fink, the following extract from a report of Consul Lachmann at Aabenraa of July 1, No. 555.<sup>2</sup>

"I carried out your instructions in respect of Dr. Möller today.

"He took note of the matter.

"In the course of the conversation, he stated that the obligation to pursue the political line had applied only to his speech in the Rigsdag. He reserved freedom of action for himself in North Schleswig. He had made the statements in his Knivsberg speech in order to keep the *Volksdeutsche* up to the mark. For what was he to say to the young people? To help him, he ought to be given several million Kroner. If that could not be done, he must act as he thought right. He could not allow orders to be issued to him in these matters. For the rest his statements had met with a good reception amongst the Germans. As to the reactions in the Danish press, he must put up with them."

In the opinion of the Legation, Dr. Möller's statements to Consul Lachmann are lame excuses which do not hold water.

Our "Rump Legation" has a great deal to do, so today I send you only these few lines and the copy of a report on the press of today's date<sup>3</sup> as well as of a report dated July 10,<sup>4</sup> which is being despatched

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 600.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8276/E588231-31/1).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8442/E594133-36).

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

today, concerning the use made of our factual material on the Polish extermination campaign against the German community in Poland.<sup>5</sup>

Best greetings. Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

HENSEL

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "For information to Deputy Director Political Department, Under State Secretary, Political Department. Then return to me for further discussion with Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle/Herr Meissner. H[ügel] 13/7." (ii) "Herr Meissner will not return from his journey until 25.7. H[ügel] 19.7."

### No. 654

F1/0286-85

*Ambassador Mackensen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

ROME, July 11, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: Bastianini<sup>1</sup> sent for me urgently this morning to inform me, on the personal instructions of the Duce, of the contents of the letter which the Duce had given Count Ciano to take with him for Franco.<sup>2</sup> I took the opportunity of noting down the contents word for word, and send this to you herewith, leaving it to your discretion whether to bring it to the notice of the Foreign Minister and the Führer.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

VON MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 604 and 663.

[Enclosure]

Typed by myself for secrecy

ROME, July 11, 1939

VON MACKENSEN<sup>3</sup>

ROME, July 8,<sup>4</sup> 1939.

DEAR FRANCO:

Count Ciano will tell you what I think:

- a) of the international situation,
- b) of Spain's position in relation to that situation,
- c) of certain problems affecting your country and Italo-Spanish relations.

These subjects have already been examined with His Excellency Señor Suñer, but it is useful to take them up again in the light of new facts.

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<sup>3</sup> From this point the original is in Italian.

<sup>4</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 488, where the date of this letter is given as July 6.

On two questions I would like to give you my opinion in advance.

1) I consider the restoration of the Monarchy most dangerous for the regime gloriously founded by you at the price of so much bloodshed.

2) Place no hopes on France and Britain. They are by definition irreconcilable enemies of *your* Spain.

3) Go resolutely to the people, which is the only great strength of nations.

All that I write, and all that Minister Ciano will tell you, is dictated by that feeling of profound and unalterable friendship which I cherish for you and for Spain.

When you come to Rome *you will feel* the soul of Fascist Italy.

Accept my most cordial greetings, and believe me,

Yours,

(signed) MUSSOLINI

## No. 655

584/242344-45

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 309 of July 12

ROME (Quir.), July 12, 1939—3:20 p.m.

Received July 12—8:45 p.m.

Pol. IV 4118.

The day before yesterday, on the strength of material, regarded as incontestable, about malicious intrigues of British, French, Dutch, and Swiss nationals in the Alto Adige, who are attempting systematically to incite the population against the German-Italian repatriation operation, Mussolini ordered a general expulsion of these nationals from the Province of Bolzano; not, however, from Italy. This expulsion is operative for tourists at a few hours' notice, for others at longer notice. The measures are being extended later to all foreigners, as nationals of other States, too, are taking part in the same agitation—Bastianini mentioned to me the United States amongst others. Report on the way.<sup>1</sup>

This morning Air Attaché General von Bülow, who is with his family in Ortisei, telephoned me that all Reich German tourists there are also affected by the measure, and he has been told that even he will be receiving a letter accordingly from the Prefect of Bolzano. Thereupon I called on Bastianini at once to tell him that I was quite unable to understand this information since:

1) such an extension was in contradiction to what he told me yesterday,

2) as I saw it, measures against Germans were only possible within the framework of the Accord, which, in my judgment, did not provide

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

for expulsion from the Province of Bolzano at a few hours' notice, and

3) the inclusion of my Air Attaché could, surely, only be the result of a mistake.

Bastianini was very much surprised at my information; otherwise he confirmed that the Duce, by his own personal decision, had extended the measure from what had originally been four States to all foreigners, but that, in drafting the regulations, it had obviously been overlooked that it should of course not apply to Reich Germans, for whose treatment, in his view too only our Berlin Agreements were valid. He said he would report the matter as speedily as possible to the Duce who, however, had just gone to the seaside and whom it would be difficult to reach in the next few hours. Till then he would instruct the Prefect at Bolzano to suspend measures against Reich Germans, and he would also instruct him that diplomats accredited to the Quirinal, and therefore General Bülow, did not, of course, come under such a measure at all. Bastianini promised to give me further information as soon as he had got into touch with the Duce. I told him that I would wait here for the reply before making my trip to the Hitler Youth Camp at Villach, of which I had informed him yesterday.

I informed General Bülow by telephone accordingly and advised him to stay on in Ortisei.

Bastianini, by the way, unreservedly agreed with my remarks on the deeply regrettable psychological effects of extending the measure, even if only in error, to Reich German tourists, and he shared my view that the feeling amongst Reich German tourists, forced to quit head over heels, formed a very unpleasant accompaniment to the repatriation operation.

I shall report by telegram on the decision of the Duce.<sup>2</sup>

MACKENSEN

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 315 of July 13 (not printed, 584/242348) Mackensen reported that Bastianini had informed him of Mussolini's decision that Reich Germans were not affected by the order. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, Nos. 553, 554, 567, 574, 575.

## No. 656

8355/E590583

### *The Legation in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 99 of July 12

SOFIA, July 12, 1939—4 p.m.

Received July 12—7:5 p.m.

W III 5915.

The King began yesterday's conversation by expressing the greatest satisfaction at the way the Berlin visit had gone off.<sup>1</sup> In the diplomatic

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the official visit paid by Kiosseivanov to Berlin July 5-7. See documents Nos. 617 and 618.

activity of recent months Bulgaria had fallen somewhat behind. This had been fully compensated for by the Berlin visit, and he was therefore particularly grateful that Berlin had taken the initiative just at this moment.

The King asked me to convey to the Reich Foreign Minister his warmest thanks for his practical support for Bulgaria's requirements in war material. Since the reception of the President of the Chamber, Moshanov, by the Reich Foreign Minister on April 21,<sup>2</sup> he had already repeatedly been conscious of the results of the Foreign Minister's intervention. He begged that favourable consideration might continue to be given, as had again been promised to the Minister President in Berlin, to Bulgarian wishes in this sphere, on which I had already been given detailed information in advance by the Minister of War, which I shall report orally in Berlin.

He had particularly at heart the strengthening of the Bulgarian fleet. He had received certain reports emanating from the Turkish General Staff, that, even if Bulgaria remained neutral, in the event of a European conflict Turkey and Rumania intended to occupy eastern parts of the country, to establish overland communication between Turkey and Rumania. Bulgaria must also be able to defend herself at sea against attacks of this kind. He therefore asked the Reich Foreign Minister to convey to the Führer his urgent personal desire that two small German submarines should immediately be transferred to the Bulgarian Navy until such time as the submarines ordered by Bulgaria were ready. He thought that in view of the fact that the Dardanelles might possibly be closed, this would also be in Germany's interests.

CLODIUS  
BÜLOW

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<sup>2</sup> No record of this reception has been found.

## No. 657

1625/389086-29

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

URGENT

LONDON, July 12, 1939—8:40 p.m.

SECRET

Received July 12—10:45 p.m.

No. 241 of July 12

Pol. II 2515.

With reference to my telegram 238<sup>1</sup> (group mutilated). With reference to my telegram of [July] 11.

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1625/389086). In this telegram of July 11 Dirksen reported information, obtained not from his usual source, about a Soviet counter proposal concerned mainly with a new formula on "internal aggression".

On the present state of the Pact negotiations<sup>2</sup> I learn the following from a completely reliable source:

1) Differences between Soviet Russia and the French and British concern (a) interpretation of the term "internal aggression", (b) the question of a military pact.

2a) Internal Aggression: Article I of the draft, which consists of 6 to 7 articles, provides for an obligation to render mutual aid if one of the three Contracting Powers becomes the victim of an attack or one or more of the countries, listed in an attached Protocol, becomes the victim of an attack, and if this is declared by one of the Contracting Powers to be a threat to vital interests.

The Russians want the text so formulated that "attack" covers both direct and indirect attack.

The British and French, on the other hand, want to have the term "attack", also "indirect attack", unmistakably formulated in the attached Protocol. They fear that otherwise Russia herself might become an attacker.

The British and French have meanwhile—"for the time being"<sup>3</sup>—renounced their desire to include Holland and Switzerland in the list, as Russia has made her agreement to the inclusion of these two countries in the aforementioned Protocol dependent on the conclusion of a mutual assistance pact with Poland and Turkey.

b) Military Pact Question: The Russians demand that, concurrently with the conclusion of a political agreement, a military agreement also be concluded. This would appear as an annexe to the political agreement. Britain and France want only a *pactum de contrahendo* in respect of a military pact, that is, an agreement that General Staff talks shall begin immediately after the conclusion of the political agreement, with the object of concluding a military agreement.

3) There is agreement on the following: (a) Consulting together in the event of threatened aggression in a part of Europe not covered by Article I in conjunction with the annexed Protocol.

b) Limiting the duration of the pact to an initial period of 5 years.

However, the possibility of renewal is obviously already provided for in the pact.

DIRKSEN

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 279, 280, 281, 282, 285 and 290.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 658

1570/380037-38

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 367 of July 12

PARIS, July 12, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 13—12:30 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 305 of July 9.<sup>2</sup>

Daladier received me yesterday evening immediately on his return from a weekend on the Normandy coast. The conversation lasted for nearly an hour and a half, and did not touch on acute questions of general policy. Nothing was said of Danzig and the Corridor. I had not seen the Minister President since our march into Prague; he therefore took the opportunity of describing the Munich negotiations to me at length and down to the last detail, specially stressing his support for the transfer of the Sudetenland to us, in spite of strong opposition in the Chamber. Trusting in our assurances, he had set himself to liberate 3½ million people of German descent from the Czech yoke, thus, unwittingly, paving the way for us to bring some 7 million Slavs under the German yoke. He had been not only deceived but also ridiculed and with him the whole French people. Confidence had been severely shaken by our arbitrary action, in contradiction to the letter and spirit of the Munich Agreement, and a German-French understanding, to which he still held in spite of everything, had been rendered very much more difficult. I would certainly not have failed to notice the sudden swing over in French public opinion. What could have been settled without difficulty at the beginning of the year now seemed to have receded into the far distance. No one regretted this more than he, but facts could not be ignored. I repeatedly interrupted the Minister and repudiated his assertions with the familiar counter arguments. Thinking along simple lines, often rather stubborn, Daladier, once obsessed with an idea, is hard to convince, and very much so when personally angered. I gave as the reason for my visit not only the expulsion of Abetz but also the hostile campaign carried on in a concentrated and systematic way by our opponents, which, in the press, the cinema, and police reports, most infamously slandered highly respected Germans who have rendered special service in the cause of Franco-German understanding, among them my closest collaborators, and which campaign had apparently even penetrated into Government quarters. If this warmongering campaign, financed in America and directed from

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 640.

London, were not stopped here, there would be no further point in continuing private work for an understanding. We should then abandon all reserve and take the offensive ourselves. In that case we would not be responsible for the consequences.

The Abetz case was the best example of the effect of this propaganda. It was absurd to attribute to him statements such as had been reported, for it was actually our opponents who were circulating these alarmist reports, in order to represent us as disturbers of the peace of Europe and to make us hated. Abetz was the friend and well-informed, intimate collaborator of the Reich Foreign Minister, and had worked tirelessly for many years towards an understanding, having rendered very great service to the improvement of Franco-German relations, and I would vouch for him personally in every way. Although I was taking this step for the suspension of the expulsion order on my own personal initiative, I could assure the Minister President straight away that the expulsion would have the worst possible effect on the Reich Foreign Minister and was bound to arouse a strong reaction throughout Germany.

Daladier replied that the personality of Abetz was hitherto not known to him but that reports from his friends tallied with those of the telephone monitoring service and created the impression that alarmist reports were being spread, which he could not tolerate. He would investigate whether, and to what extent, there were any misunderstandings here, and would then give me his answer. Nor must it be overlooked that talk and activities had a different effect and were judged differently in a favourable atmosphere from what they were in times of crisis.

I urged Daladier to make enquiries from Abetz's numerous friends, e.g. Senator Henry Hay,<sup>3</sup> which he promised to do. The strong campaign in the newspapers hostile to the Minister President and in opposition circles will certainly make cancellation of the expulsion order difficult. If my intervention fails, I will take further steps.

WELCZECK

<sup>3</sup> Gaston Henry Haye, Senator for Seine-et-Oise.

## No. 659

2450/515313

*The Foreign Ministry to the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht*

Express Letter

July 12, 1939.  
W 1091 g. Rs.

The Führer, during the recent visit of the Bulgarian Minister President



to Berlin, promised the latter his full support over Bulgarian requests for delivery of war material. The Bulgarian Minister President, in his conversations with the Führer<sup>1</sup> and the Reich Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> described the following requests as particularly urgent:

1) *As soon as possible* the transfer on loan of 2,000 machine guns for such time until the 3,000 machine guns ordered by Bulgaria from the Brno Armament Works are delivered.

2) Prompt delivery of 30-40 tanks from former Czecho-Slovakian stocks to equip a mobile division.

3) Considerable reduction in the delivery periods for the artillery material ordered by Bulgaria from Germany, which under the present agreements will, in general, not start until October 1940.

In accordance with the Führer's order, the Foreign Minister thinks it desirable to fulfil quickly and fully Bulgaria's requests for war material, and would be grateful in the first instance for a statement on what can be done regarding the three requests referred to above.

By order:  
WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 617.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 618.

## No. 660

5569/E398294

*Ambassador Attolico to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

PERSONAL

THE ROYAL ITALIAN EMBASSY.

BERLIN, July 12, 1939.

W 1225 g.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: It was decided, during the conversations on economic matters which took place in Berlin last May,<sup>1</sup> and later, during the conversations between the heads of the German and Italian Air Ministries in Berlin and in Rome, that Germany would deliver anti-aircraft artillery to Italy,<sup>2</sup> also in order to put right the German-Italian clearing which shows a large balance in favour of Italy.

It concerns fifty batteries altogether and I am given to understand from Rome that it seems appropriate that the delivery of the above-mentioned material be effected at the earliest possible moment.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 423.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter received in the Foreign Ministry on July 6 the Air Ministry conveyed a ruling by Göring that anti-aircraft guns were not to be supplied to Italy (not printed, 5569/E398293).

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum, St.S. No. 571 of July 15 (not printed, 1571/380168), Weizsäcker recorded that Attolico had again raised the matter of the supply of the fifty anti-aircraft batteries to Italy, saying that there appeared to be some hitch over the granting of an export licence by Göring; the Italian Service Attachés would raise the matter with Colonel General Milch.

I should be very grateful if you would speak to the competent authorities and I send meanwhile my most cordial greetings.<sup>4</sup>

I am etc.,

ATTOLICO

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "Settled orally between myself and the Ambassador and between Colonel General Milch and the Italian Air Attaché. Cl[odius] 29/7." See document No. 738.

## No. 661

276/178481-84

*Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Ambassador Schulenburg*

"SCHMIDT'S HOTEL BERLINER HOF,"

BERLIN, July 12, 1939.

Received July 14.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR: Herr Lamla,<sup>1</sup> whom I asked to remember me to you, has probably already told you a few things. However, I would still like to report on my impressions here. The Reich Foreign Minister was busy with the Bulgarian state visit and did not wish to see me. Otherwise, however, with the exception of Gaus and Selchow,<sup>2</sup> who were on leave, I have talked to all the gentlemen concerned. The State Secretary was interested to hear an opinion as to what result the Anglo-Franco-Soviet pact negotiations would have. He said that he could not imagine that the Soviet Union, after having entered into the negotiations, would let them pass off without results and sink back into isolation. He was also interested in your conversations with Molotov and remarked that, in his opinion, our side had done enough *politically* for the moment. Then we discussed the instructions concerning the information to be given to Mikoyan, and I expressed myself as in favour of giving this information. (The instructions were submitted to the Führer by the Reich Foreign Minister and were despatched with an addition on the language to be held made by the State Secretary.)<sup>3</sup> The State Secretary believed that we might try to make some progress *economically* but slowly and step by step. The State Secretary apparently did not wish to go further into the subject of the "Berlin Treaty"; he asked about the course of the discussion with Molotov on this point.<sup>4</sup> I referred to your second telegram<sup>5</sup> and said that you had only touched upon the subject. My leave seemed to him rather long!! I shall therefore be back at the beginning of August.

Herr Schnurre was not in a very good mood. He stressed repeatedly

<sup>1</sup> Third Secretary at the German Embassy in the Soviet Union.

<sup>2</sup> An official of Pers. Z (cipher and communications).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 628.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 579.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 607.

that without a *positive* reaction by Molotov it would be difficult to make any progress. He showed me an order from the Führer, transmitted by telephone on June 30,<sup>6</sup> according to which further action in Moscow was to be stopped in view of the attitude of the Russians. Thereupon, Schnurre drafted a memorandum<sup>7</sup> and the instructions. I told him that the Embassy, and particularly you yourself, had done everything possible but we really could not drag Molotov and Mikoyan in through the Brandenburg Gate.

Unfortunately, I only spent a short time with Woermann, because the State Secretary sent for me. He considered it significant that the Soviets, through Astakhov, had taken the initiative for the *rapprochement*. I did not deny that, but I called attention to the Fournier [Agency] report published by the *Temps* about the negative statement of the Soviet Embassy here, which had escaped him. Incidentally, he made an interesting remark about the Berlin Treaty which makes it appear advisable not to touch the subject again without instructions. More on this orally! I have talked to Schliep about the *Komsomol* crew<sup>8</sup> and caused him to have further steps taken now over their return. Of course, we also discussed everything else concerned, including Meyer-Heydenhagen. I have also stirred up Herr Schwendemann about the *Komsomol* crew. Then I discussed with Braun von Stumm (since Dr. Schmidt was not available) everything concerning the press in the sense of your letter to Seibert<sup>9</sup> which, incidentally, Schmidt still had, and this fell on fertile ground.

In the Personnel Division I talked to Herren Kriebel, Schroeder, Dienstmann, Dittmann, etc. In accordance with your instructions I expressed myself against one of us being transferred.

According to my impressions the Soviet Union problem still arouses the greatest interest here. Opinions, however, fluctuate and are undecided. The will to take a definite political stand has not yet asserted itself. Tonight I am going to Bad Gastein, Hotel Kaiserhof.

With most cordial regards, I remain, dear Ambassador,

Yours etc.,

Heil Hitler!

W. VON TIPPESKIRCH

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 583.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 596.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 610.

<sup>9</sup> Not printed (127/69544-48). This letter of June 29 advised on the line to be adopted in an article in the *Völkischer Beobachter*, of which Seibert had sent him a draft.

## No. 662

1625/388097

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 299 of July 12

BUCHAREST, July 13, 1939—10 a.m.

Received July 13—1:30 p.m.

Pol. II 2520.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 254<sup>1</sup> and 257.<sup>2</sup>

I have communicated the contents of these telegrams to the Foreign Minister and once more discussed the question of the British and also French agreement with Turkey. On his remarking that it was hard for a statesman to forgo an offer of assistance by other countries without any *quid pro quo* in the event of his country's being attacked and defending itself, I tried again to convince him that the conclusion of such an agreement even among third parties only and without his consent could be interpreted as an act whereby he was encouraging British encirclement. That we would not like to see this happen was self-evident. If Britain, France and Turkey were honest in their intentions towards Rumania it followed that they would have to renounce their plan as soon as Rumania expressed a wish to that effect. Rumania should take the Northern States as her example. The Italian Minister<sup>3</sup> had spoken to the Foreign Minister on similar lines shortly before.<sup>4</sup> When I asked the Foreign Minister what Yugoslavia had to say on the matter, he said that the Ambassador here<sup>5</sup> is discussing nothing, but that he could not understand why there was no word from Cincar-Marković; it was really not possible for him to visit him again now. I gathered from this that the Foreign Minister would very much like to hear the opinion of his Yugoslav colleague.

FABRICIUS

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 633.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 651.

<sup>3</sup> Pellegrino Ghigi.

<sup>4</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 542.

<sup>5</sup> Jovan Dučić.

## No. 663

1583/388441

*The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

No. 671 of July 13

SAN SEBASTIAN, July 13, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 13—10:35 p.m.

Pol. III 1608 g.

The Italian Foreign Minister arrived in San Sebastian yesterday

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

afternoon,<sup>2</sup> and was received towards the evening by Generalissimo Franco. After the dinner given in his honour by the Spanish Foreign Minister, Ciano told me that he wanted to inform me in detail about what passed in his conversation with Franco,<sup>3</sup> and requested me to pass it on at once to the Reich Foreign Minister.

He had started by telling the Generalissimo that the Axis Powers desired a period of peace and consolidation. They would not provoke war. The disturbances of recent times were only due to certain foreign warmongers. In face of the Anglo-French war psychosis the Axis had remained calm and the crisis had passed. If other Powers, however, unleashed a war the Axis Powers would march as one man. If there were war over Danzig, Poland would be overrun in a few weeks at the most, without the Western Powers being able to prevent it. The Axis would then organize conditions in eastern Europe, and particularly in the Balkans, to suit their own interests.

In his opinion Spain could not remain neutral in a possible European war, as the victory of the Axis Powers could alone guarantee Spain's future and freedom. Nevertheless, Italy, who had supported the national movement in Spain for idealist reasons, did not dream of presenting a bill and asking for an agreement on paper. The bond had been sufficiently cemented by blood shed in common. Still Italy—like the German Government—did in present circumstances expect Spanish benevolent neutrality in the event of war.

To this the Generalissimo replied that the Axis Powers could count on more, namely the most extreme degree of friendly neutrality from Spain. Spanish precautionary measures on the French frontier, troop movements etc., were already complying with this attitude. At present, however, Spain needed another two, three, or perhaps even five years for reconstruction, after which a different situation would have been created.

STOHRER

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 654.

<sup>3</sup> For Ciano's record of his conversation with Franco, see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 611.

## No. 664

1570/330039

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 315

BERLIN, July 13, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador personally. Decipher yourself.

With reference to your telegram No. 367.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 658.

The Reich Foreign Minister has instructed me to telegraph the following to you:

He had the impression that his instructions in the Abetz affair had not been properly understood and dealt with. He saw no signs of a "frontal attack" [*frontales Vorgehen*] and is under the impression, that, in so far as your report by telegram gives the full course of the conversation, Daladier will now postpone the case *ad calendas graecas*. On the strength of your report and after noting your somewhat more favourable prognosis by telephone yesterday,<sup>3</sup> the Reich Foreign Minister is of the opinion that Daladier is obviously evading the issue. Abetz is to return to France in the next few days. The Reich Foreign Minister requests you to report by telegram the steps you intend to take to make this possible.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> No record has been found.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 369 of July 14 (not printed, 1570/380041) Welczeck replied that he had made the *démarche* energetically and in unequivocal terms, using the words of his instructions; if a satisfactory reply were not then forthcoming, after allowing for the national holiday, he would make further representations, this time to Bonnet, and would announce Abetz's impending arrival. In telegram No. 316 of July 16 (not printed, 1570/380042) Weizsäcker replied conveying Ribbentrop's instructions that representations were not to be made to Bonnet but, as hitherto, to Daladier. This was to be done immediately after the holiday and Welczeck was to state that, as far as he knew, Abetz was actually in France.

## No. 665

259/169655-56

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 559

BERLIN, July 13, 1939.

Today the French Ambassador introduced to me his new Counsellor of Embassy,<sup>1</sup> and then took leave of me<sup>2</sup> for an initial period of about fourteen days' leave, which he intends to spend in the South of France. M. Coulondre asked if I still held the same views on the situation as at our last conversation. I answered in the affirmative, but added the following two observations:

1) I mentioned Bonnet's memorandum,<sup>3</sup> transmitted to the Foreign Minister by Count Welczeck, on the French attitude in a German-Polish conflict. I assumed that a very precise answer would be returned to this memorandum. M. Coulondre tried to represent Bonnet's memorandum as an act of consultation and loyalty on the lines of the Paris Agreement of December 1938.<sup>4</sup> But I did not let myself

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Tarbé de Saint-Hardouin.

<sup>2</sup> See also the *French Yellow Book*, No. 162.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 602.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 369.

be drawn into a discussion on this subject, in order not to forestall the Reich Foreign Minister.

2) On the other hand, I told M. Coulondre that the latest speech of the British Prime Minister<sup>5</sup> constituted a harmful new factor. In his statement Mr. Chamberlain admittedly said that if a better political atmosphere were created, agreement could perhaps be reached on the German-Polish problem. He, however, was doing his part in worsening the atmosphere and dividing the parties still further. He was encouraging the Poles in stubbornness and stirring them up, whilst attempting to intimidate German policy, which, with us, usually works the other way. But Chamberlain was building his whole political structure on a mistaken conception in maintaining that Germany had guaranteed the *status quo* in Danzig until 1944. Chamberlain's colleagues could surely have troubled to look up the documents before they misled their Chief into such an error.

Coulondre then tried to represent the Polish attitude as being moderate. I disputed this, referred him to Polish comments on the Chamberlain statement and said that, in my opinion, a British newspaper was quite right in stating, a few days ago, that crises were the fault not of secret but of public diplomacy and that the members of the British Cabinet should take a leaf out of the book of their German colleagues and go off and take a holiday.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>5</sup> On July 10, 1939. See Editors' Note on p. 898.

## No. 666

183/85927-28

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 561

BERLIN, July 13, 1939.

I invited the Swiss Minister to call on me today<sup>1</sup> to explain to him, following on the conversations conducted by our Minister in Berne, that we did not consider the Swiss attitude to the Franco-British offer of guarantee to be beyond reproach. The fact was that the Swiss Minister in Paris<sup>2</sup> had been invited to an official conversation at the Quai d'Orsay, where he was informed that Britain and France intended to give a guarantee. The Swiss Minister had taken note of this communication with thanks. Later, the same Minister—so I was told by Herr Frölicher—again confirmed to the Quai d'Orsay that he had transmitted the communication to Berne. After our *démarche* in Berne the Swiss Government had certainly represented themselves in public and in a

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 646.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Walter Stucki.

press communiqué as being unaffected by the promise of a guarantee, but in a manner not entirely unequivocal and not quite clear. The Netherlands Government for instance had adopted a much more precise attitude. It was the duty of the Swiss Government to restore the balance which had been disturbed and to return to the centre of neutrality where they belonged.

Minister Frölicher tried very stubbornly to refute my arguments. We had misunderstood Motta's communication, his colleague in Paris had expressed himself differently, etc. However, I held to my thesis.

Finally M. Frölicher said he would be prepared to try to induce Berne to do what was necessary.

WEIZSÄCKER

## No. 667

2002/442324-25

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 562

BERLIN, July 13, 1939.

Pol. IV 4199.

I again received the Slovak Minister today, at his urgent request, as he had asked either to speak to the Reich Foreign Minister himself or for a conversation to be arranged for his Minister President with the Führer.<sup>1</sup>

It was a question of the deliberations now in progress on military matters and property rights, which are being conducted partly by a military delegation in Bratislava and partly at present in Berlin under the chairmanship of Minister Eisenlohr.

First I explained to the Minister the physical impossibility of speaking to the Foreign Minister now. Nor could I arrange a conversation for Minister President Tiso with the Führer on such specialized questions. I said he could rest assured that our negotiators were acting on the instructions issued to them by authoritative persons in the Reich. There was no justification for asserting that Slovakia was being forced to give way all along the line; on the contrary we were doing everything in our power to help Slovakia. If, in the discussions between the Protectorate and Slovakia on property rights, the Slovak desires were not being met in every respect, this was not due to our lack of good will, but rather because there were facts which both we and Slovakia had to take into account. Nor, in the matter of German military claims, did I give way at all to the Minister, but requested him to tell his negotiators that they should regard our heads of delegation as fully empowered representatives of the German views, and conduct themselves accordingly.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 611.



## No. 668

8441/E594117-18

*The Director of the Political Department to the Embassy in  
Italy and the Consulate General at Milan*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, July 14, 1939—6:45 p.m.

1) To Rome No. 338.

e.o. Pol. IV 4164.

2) To Milan No. 17.

With reference to 1) my telegram No. 335 of July 11.<sup>1</sup>2) my telegram No. 15 of July 11.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday's article in the *Temps*,<sup>2</sup> trying in a clumsy way to drive a wedge between Germany and Italy and also, in this connection, giving a distorted version of the Tyrol migration, called for a general denial which was issued by DNB today and is carried by the German press as front-page news. It was also necessary, in this connection, to refer to the distorted description of the return of the South Tyrolese. DNB thus speaks of the voluntary return of German fellow-countrymen. It says that these measures are merely directed at organizing uniformly and marshalling systematically, by mutual consent, the erratic return of Germans which has already been going on consistently for some considerable time.

DNB compares this comparatively insignificant migration movement with the deportation of 1.7 million Germans from the German territories in Poland and of many hundreds of thousands of Germans from Alsace.

Magistrati has been informed of the reasons which made a departure from the hitherto agreed policy necessary.<sup>3</sup>

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 643, footnote 2.<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted (8441/E594119-20). The article in question is entitled: "Italian Policy".<sup>3</sup> No record has been found.

## No. 669

8271/E588179

*The State Secretary to the Ambassador in France*

St.S. No. 86 g.Rs.

BERLIN, July 14, 1939.

Pol. V 782 g.Rs.

With reference to your despatch No. A 2859 of July 1.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Not found. This was presumably the cover note with which Welzeck forwarded to Berlin the Note of July 1 (document No. 602); see document No. 603.

I request you to transmit to M. Bonnet, by messenger, as soon as possible the attached letter from the Foreign Minister.

A copy of the letter is enclosed for you personally.

I request you to inform me by telephone of the delivery.<sup>2</sup> The French Ambassador will then receive from me a copy of the Note of July 1 handed to you by M. Bonnet and of the Foreign Minister's letter in reply. I will also let the Italian Ambassador have the same documents.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of July 15 (8391/E591811) Woermann noted that Welzeck had informed him by telephone at 12:35 p.m. that the letter had been given to Bonnet that day.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "1) Coulondre has received a copy. 2) Attolico has ditto. 3) The British Ambassador should perhaps be informed orally during the next week. 4) Some Missions to receive copies. 5) Press temporarily nothing. 6) Resubmit. W[eizsäcker] 15/7." A further marginal note against 3) reads: "Done on 17/7".

<sup>4</sup> On July 17 Weizsäcker sent copies of the letter here printed to the German Ambassadors in London, Rome, Warsaw, Tokyo, Moscow and to the Chargé d'Affaires in Washington with a cover note (not printed, 121/119530) stating that use might be made of the lines of thought expressed in the letter, but the fact of the exchange of letters was not to be divulged for the present. In memorandum St.S. No. 592 of July 24 (not printed, 2798/548115) Weizsäcker recorded having informed Oshima privately of the exchange. A minute (not printed, 8391/E591809) shows that the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires, Canaris and Oshima were each sent copies of the letter. See also documents Nos. 682, 697 and 701.

121/119531-34

[Enclosure]

PERSONAL

FUSCHL, July 13, 1939.  
zu Pol. V 782 Ang. II g.Rs.

MY DEAR M. BONNET: On July 1 you handed to Count Welzeck a Note intended for me personally, the contents of which now oblige me also to inform Your Excellency clearly and unmistakably of the German Government's position on German-French relations in general and on the Danzig question in particular.

On December 6, 1938, the German and French Governments signed a Declaration<sup>5</sup> by which they solemnly recognized as final the existing frontiers between Germany and France, and by which they agreed to do all within their power to ensure peaceful and good-neighbourly relations between the two countries. For the Reich Government this Declaration was the logical consequence of the policy of understanding with France, consistently followed by them since they came to power, and to which they still wish even today to adhere in principle.

As to your remark on the reservation embodied in Article 3 of the German-French Declaration, in respect of the special relations of Germany and France with third Powers, it is by no means correct that this reservation embraces a recognition of France's special relations

<sup>5</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 369.

with Poland. In the conversations which took place in Berlin and Paris during the preliminary negotiations on the Declaration and on the occasion of its signature, it was, on the contrary, completely clear that the reservation applied to the special relations of friendship between France and Britain, and between Germany and Italy. In particular we agreed in our discussions in Paris on December 6, 1938,<sup>6</sup> that respect for the vital interests of either side constituted a prerequisite and principle for the future development of good German-French relations. On this occasion I expressly referred to Eastern Europe as being a German sphere of interest, and you—quite contrary to what you assert in your Note—emphasized on your side at the time that a fundamental change had come about in France's attitude to Eastern European questions since the Munich Conference.

It is in direct contradiction to this position established by us at the beginning of December, that France has made the Führer's generous proposal to Poland for a settlement of the Danzig question, and Poland's somewhat peculiar reaction, the occasion for entering into new and deeper commitments to Poland against Germany. At the end of your Note, these commitments are defined to the effect that any military intervention by Poland in the event of a change in the *status quo* in Danzig would cause France to give Poland immediate military assistance. On this policy of the French Government I have the following comments to make:

1) Just as Germany has never interfered in France's spheres of vital interest, Germany must categorically and once and for all reject any interference by France in Germany's spheres of vital interest. Germany's relations with her Eastern neighbours, whatever form they may assume, do not affect any French interests, but are a matter exclusively concerning Germany's own policy. Accordingly, the Reich Government do not consider themselves in a position to discuss with the French Government questions of German-Polish relations, still less to admit France's right to exert any influence on questions connected with shaping the future destiny of the German city of Danzig.

2) For your personal information, however, about the German view in the Polish question I would like to state the following: The Polish Government have replied to the Führer's historic offer, made once and for all, for the settlement of the Danzig question and for the final consolidation of German-Polish relations with threats of war which can only be described as strange. For the moment it is impossible to tell whether the Polish Government will revise this peculiar attitude and return to reason. But as long as they persist in this unreasonable attitude, nothing can be said except that any violation of Danzig soil by Poland,

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<sup>6</sup> For the German record of these conversations, see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 370.

or any provocation by Poland which is incompatible with the prestige of the German Reich, would be answered by an immediate German advance and the destruction of the Polish Army.

3) The statement, mentioned above, in the final sentence of your Note would, if taken literally, mean that France recognizes Poland's right to resist with military force any change whatever in the *status quo* in Danzig, and that, if Germany declines to tolerate such a violation of German interests, France will attack Germany. Should such really be the purpose of French policy, I must beg you to note that such threats would only strengthen the Führer still further in his resolve to safeguard German interests with all the means at his disposal. The Führer has always desired German-French understanding and has always described as madness another war between the two countries which are no longer separated by any conflicting vital interests. Should it, however, be that the French Government want war, then they will always find Germany ready. The responsibility for such a war would then have to be borne solely by the French Government before their people and before the world.

In view of the pleasant personal relations with Your Excellency which I was able to form on the occasion of the signature of the Declaration of December 6, 1938, I regret that your Note has constrained me to make this reply. I do not wish to abandon the hope that, in the end, reason may yet prevail and the French people recognize where their true interests lie. Since I have worked for over twenty years for a German-French understanding, this would also represent for me personally the fulfilment of a sincere desire.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP

No. 670

97/108421

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 563

BERLIN, July 14, 1939.

Colonel General Keitel has addressed an enquiry to me through Lieutenant Colonel von Lossberg as to whether it is politically advisable to show in public the twelve light and four heavy guns which are in Danzig and to let exercises be carried out with them, or whether it is better to conceal the presence of these guns.

Please inform the OKW that the undoubtedly necessary exercises with the guns should, for the time being, be carried out in the places where the guns are at present sheltered. Before showing the guns in public, parading them through the city and carrying out exercises on the sites, it would be expedient to wait a little longer. The Poles would

be sure to lay themselves open again, whereupon an answer could then be made by the public display of the batteries.

Submitted herewith to Under State Secretary Political Department, for Herr von Nostitz with the request that the above be transmitted textually to the Wehrmacht.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Marginal notes: Typed: "Copies to the Foreign Minister and to Senior Counsellor Hewel (via Salzburg)." Handwritten against the second paragraph: "The Foreign Minister is in agreement. To be filed. K[essel] 19/VII". Against the whole text in an unidentified handwriting: "Slowly!"

## No. 671

259/169059-60

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 566

BERLIN, July 14, 1939.

The British Ambassador, after his short stay in London,<sup>1</sup> paid me an official visit today, in which the conversation naturally again turned mainly on the general situation.<sup>2</sup> The remarks on both sides followed the usual lines. The Ambassador did not deny, but also did not expressly admit, that Chamberlain's latest statement<sup>3</sup> had brought about a deterioration rather than an improvement in the international atmosphere. He used the argument which can so often be heard today, that in the year 1914 Sir Edward Grey, as is widely held, had been to blame for shrouding himself and the British Government in a cloud of mist. The present British Government desired to save themselves from such a reproach. On the other hand Neville Henderson understood very well that *public* statements of this kind merely make the ally, in this case Poland, more obstinate, instead of bringing her to reason.

At one point in the conversation Henderson said that it was symptomatic of the situation that reservist classes had now been called up in Germany after all. I replied that it was a fact that in France and Poland manpower of some half a million over and above the normal strength was under arms, whereas the call-up of reservist classes by announcements in our newspapers only represented the practice of every standing army in the summer. I added further that British foreign policy seemed to me also to be engaged in full preparations for war, and to be looking round wherever possible for allies, though not with striking success. Henderson then further expatiated on the general

<sup>1</sup> July 4-9. See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 177, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> For Sir Neville Henderson's account of this conversation see *ibid.*, vol. vi, Nos. 322, 328, 332 and 335.

<sup>3</sup> The reference appears to be to the statement made in the House of Commons on July 10. See Editors' Note on p. 898.

situation and ended his remarks by expressing his confidence in the Führer's political genius for the timely and bloodless solution of difficulties and conflicts.

The actual object of the Ambassador's visit was as follows:

Henderson stated that he had come from London with the intention of speaking to us about a kind of press truce. It was very inconvenient that a fresh and understandable press battle should have flared up through Commander King-Hall's inflammatory letters,<sup>4</sup> which Henderson himself most severely criticized. Nonetheless he wanted to ask my opinion as to whether it would be possible to enter into a kind of press truce with us, perhaps from the beginning of August when the British Parliament went into recess.

I did not answer this forthwith but first objected that we could not be gagged if proceedings such as King-Hall's propaganda by letters or the conversations for an Anglo-Soviet alliance or such-like things called for criticism. Also it would probably be said here that the German press would be just as quiet or as vocal as the British.

Henderson let it go for the moment at this counter argument and then wanted me to tell him whether I would advise him to speak to Dr. Goebbels direct at some time.

As the Ambassador let it be understood that he was not putting forward his suggestion without the approval of his Government, I would like to give him an answer at a later opportunity.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>4</sup> For a fuller account of this venture and the texts of the five *News-Letters* which were being distributed in Germany, see Stephen King-Hall, *Total Victory* (London, 1941), pp. 208-211 and 283-304. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 337.

## No. 672

495/233353

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 567

BERLIN, July 14, 1939.

The British Ambassador, like the American Chargé d'Affaires, approached me today on the matter of our not having issued an *exequatur* for a British Consul General at Prague.<sup>1</sup>

Henderson frankly admitted that it was illogical to ask us for an

<sup>1</sup> According to a memorandum by Gaus of June 20 (not printed, 2050/447395-98) the *exequatur* question had been the subject of a German circular note and of replies by the French, British and American Governments in May and June. Gaus expressed the opinion that the request by each of these Governments for an *exequatur* for a Consul at Prague appeared to be incompatible with their non-recognition of the Protectorate and could not, therefore, be granted. In memoranda of July 11 (not printed, 3062/611801-02) and July 22 (not printed, 2050/447426) Weizsäcker and Woermann respectively recorded that this matter had again been raised by the American and French Chargés d'Affaires.

*exequatur* and at the same time to deny us sovereignty in Prague. But he added the remark that, in that case, our negotiations about the Czech gold in London would presumably also come to a standstill.<sup>2</sup> I told Henderson that I could not help that: the British Government had simply made a blunder. The affair could have been passed off quietly and without trouble if Mr. Butler had not made that statement in the House of Commons.<sup>3</sup> Henderson then asked whether perhaps the British signature to an agreement on these Czech gold reserves could be regarded as a harmless and tacit British recognition of the Protectorate by his Government, to which I replied that I did not have the present state of the negotiations sufficiently in mind to express an opinion on this. His Government would do well to consider again how they could get out of the impasse.<sup>4</sup>

Henderson also asserted, as had the American Chargé d'Affaires, that in the parallel case of Abyssinia the Italians had been less intransigent than we were. This I disputed.<sup>5</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> Czech gold and other Czech assets in the United Kingdom, the transfer of which had been blocked by the Treasury immediately after the German occupation of Prague and subsequently by the Czecho-Slovakia (Restrictions on Banking Accounts, etc.) Act of Mar. 27, 1939, were the subject of Anglo-German negotiations initiated through the German Embassy in London at the end of March. Extensive material on these negotiations has been filmed on Serials 8375 and 7981.

<sup>3</sup> On June 19. The statement said that, in H.M. Government's opinion, the application for an *exequatur* for a Consul General at Prague, while implying *de facto* recognition of the present position in Bohemia and Moravia, did not involve any modification of the views already expressed by H.M. Government on this question. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 348, cols. 1786-1787.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 251 of July 17 (not printed, 8375/E591078) Wiehl communicated the sense of this conversation to the Embassy in London with instructions to Wohlthat to raise the matter with Waley (Principal Assistant Secretary at H.M. Treasury). In a further telegram, No. 253 of July 18 (not printed, 8375/E591081), he informed the Embassy that although Ribbentrop's decision on the *exequatur* question was still outstanding, British signature to an agreement with the German Government on the Czech balances would presumably be regarded as sufficient recognition of the Protectorate for the issue of the desired *exequatur*. An agreement with the Protectorate authorities or the Prague National Bank would not suffice. See also document No. 698.

<sup>5</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "To be examined, please, between the Departments, for later joint discussion with me. The Italian precedent should also be examined."

## No. 673

585/242451-54

### *Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, July 14, 1939.

#### MEMORANDUM ON A CONVERSATION WITH THE KING OF BULGARIA

King Boris, who, some time ago at his first reception of Minister von Richthofen,<sup>1</sup> had expressed the wish to be able to see me again in Sofia

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 415.

soon, to discuss the German deliveries of war material to Bulgaria, received me in Sofia on July 11.

At the beginning of the conversation which lasted nearly two and a half hours, the King gave a detailed account of his views upon Bulgaria's position and the aims of her foreign policy. I may briefly summarize this review as follows:

Bulgaria has striven for years continually to improve her political relations with Yugoslavia and Turkey, in order to concentrate the more effectively on directing her territorial aspirations against Rumania and Greece.

Relations with Yugoslavia had developed satisfactorily in recent years.<sup>2</sup> It was fortunate for both countries that the Macedonian question had been eliminated from the discussions. Certainly the conditions for this had been the presence in Belgrade of a strong and reasonable Government which saw to it that the Bulgarophil part of Macedonia included in Southern Serbia was well treated. As long as M. Stojadinović, whom he regarded as the ablest statesman of Yugoslavia and whose departure<sup>3</sup> he greatly regretted, was in power, he had had no anxieties on that score. Now, conditions in Belgrade had become somewhat more uncertain. In addition, the fact that Prince Paul regarded himself solely as a caretaker, and during the relatively brief period of his regency did not desire to take any decisions which would be finally binding on policy, had a disturbing effect. For this reason there was also unfortunately no prospect of reaching an understanding with the Prince Regent about the territory of Čaribrod which had always belonged to Bulgaria. Bulgaria had deliberately refrained from putting forward territorial claims against Yugoslavia. Nor did he intend to put forward such claims in the future. He believed however, that the moment would come when Yugoslavia herself would realize that it would be in the interests of final peace to return the territory of Čaribrod to Bulgaria of her own free will. However, no such gesture could be expected before the end of the regency.

He was in general satisfied with the reception accorded the Minister President in Bled,<sup>4</sup> although there too the Yugoslavs had again evaded any really clear commitment. Here the King hinted that the Prince Regent's strong British sympathies also played a part in his general attitude.

The reorientation of Turkey had put Bulgaria in a difficult position. For one thing Bulgaria must now refortify her hitherto militarily neglected southern frontier. Besides, the Turkish attitude had unfor-

<sup>2</sup> A Treaty of Friendship between Bulgaria and Yugoslavia had been signed in Belgrade on Jan. 24, 1937. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 141, pp. 879-880.

<sup>3</sup> He had resigned on Feb. 4, 1939.

<sup>4</sup> Kiosseivanov had taken part in conversations on Yugoslav-Bulgarian relations at Bled, July 9-10. See also documents Nos. 675 and 689.



tunately had a most unfavourable influence upon Rumanian foreign policy. Nevertheless, he did not intend to change Bulgarian foreign policy towards Turkey and possibly take up again Bulgaria's former territorial claims, which had since been dropped. Territorial claims must continue to be limited to the Dobruja and Western Thrace.

Feeling against Rumania among the Bulgarian people continued to be very strong. The Rumanians had not been forgiven for stealing the Dobruja without fighting after the Second Balkan War.<sup>5</sup> Moreover the Southern Dobruja was very important as a granary for Bulgaria, whereas economically it played no role for a great corn country like Rumania. He regretted that, owing to the character of King Carol, it was not possible to bring about a personal and confidential discussion with him on the Dobruja question. Besides, the strongly personal policy of prestige pursued by King Carol naturally hampered any amicable settlement.

Greece was no military or political factor, and by herself would not be strong enough to resist the return of Western Thrace, which the Greeks never seriously expected finally to keep. Turkish opposition to giving back Western Thrace was, therefore, at the moment stronger than Greek. He had reliable reports that 120 Turkish officers, including twenty General Staff officers, were at present engaged in Thrace, preparing its defence by Turkish troops. (During the afternoon of the same day the King sent his *Chef de Cabinet*<sup>6</sup> to my hotel, to show and read out to me the original of a report from the Bulgarian Minister in Ankara on Turkey's military plans.) Britain, too, would oppose the return of Thrace, because she would never like seeing a Slav Power in the Aegean. On this point, the King observed that, in his view, it must also be of the greatest importance for Germany and Italy to have a naval base in the Aegean Sea in a Bulgarian Dedeagach.

Continuing, the King expressed himself very frankly about Bulgaria's position as regards domestic politics and the Bulgarian people's attitude towards questions of foreign policy. Step by step he would stabilize the conduct of affairs, which was independent of Parliament. He thought, however, that given the character of the Bulgarian people, it was wise to retain Parliament at least in its existing form, with its powers restricted. As to the line in foreign policy, a few old Parliamentarians, former Free Masons and with Western sympathies, occasionally caused trouble and got out of step. Nor must it be overlooked that the Bulgarian people's sympathy for Russia—naturally not for Bolshevism—would always be strong. Here too Panслав sympathies showed themselves, which he had not been able entirely to prevent from occasionally flaring up after the establishment of the Protectorate.

<sup>5</sup> Rumania had obtained the Southern Dobruja under the Treaty of Bucharest, signed Aug. 10, 1913.

<sup>6</sup> General Constantin Panov.

Thus he had also been awaiting with some anxiety the joint congress of the Yugoslav Sokol and the Bulgarian Junaki,<sup>7</sup> being held just now in Sofia. As this Congress had been planned at a time when Czecho-Slovakia was still an independent State, it had originally been intended that Czech Sokols should participate also. He had been afraid that this might lead to demonstrations by irresponsible elements and had, therefore, in advance of the Congress, brought pressure to bear upon all the authorities involved with a view to avoiding such demonstrations at all costs. Happily the Congress had so far gone off without incident. All these things were in any case quite irrelevant to Bulgaria's foreign policy. He knew that Bulgaria must always remain at Germany's side and that Bulgaria's national hopes could only be fulfilled, if indeed at all, with the aid of Germany and of the Führer. He would also not forget that the liberation of Bulgaria from the military shackles of the Treaty of Neuilly<sup>8</sup> would not have been possible without the successes achieved by the Führer.

The King then came to speak of the Bulgarian armaments position. It was a source of great anxiety to him that Bulgaria was lagging very much behind her neighbours with her armaments. He then made the statements already reported by me in my telegram,<sup>9</sup> a copy of which is appended.

Details of the desires expressed by the King, the Bulgarian War Minister and other interested Bulgarian persons about speeding up deliveries of German war material will be dealt with in a special memorandum.

CLODIUS

<sup>7</sup> The youth movements of the two countries.

<sup>8</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 211.

<sup>9</sup> Document No. 656.

## No. 674

2185/472244

*Senior Counsellor Erich Kordt to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

SALZBURG, July 14, 1939.

MY DEAR STATE SECRETARY: The Foreign Minister has instructed me to ask you to inform Ambassador von Dirksen, after his normal leave has begun,<sup>1</sup> that before returning to his post in London, he should wait for special instructions from the Foreign Minister, and should not leave for London before speaking to him.

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

ERICH KORDT

<sup>1</sup> On July 11 Dirksen had written to Weizsäcker (not printed, 2795/548036) asking whether he could go on leave about the middle of August, and, if this were not possible owing to the political situation, whether he could come to Berlin to report at the beginning of August. On July 13 Weizsäcker replied by letter (not printed, 2795/548037) that Ribbentrop agreed to Dirksen going on leave shortly. Dirksen arrived in Berlin from London on Aug. 14; see vol. VII of this Series, document No. 58.

## No. 675

8418/E592816

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 15, 1939.

The Yugoslav Minister called on me today and told me the following:

The Reich Foreign Minister had pointed out to him, after the visit of the Prince Regent,<sup>1</sup> that it seemed desirable that Yugoslavia should markedly dissociate herself from the Balkan Pact. The Yugoslav Government believed that they must proceed cautiously and step by step in this matter. The first expression of a certain degree of dissociation was already contained in the Bulgarian-Yugoslav Bled communiqué,<sup>2</sup> which read:

“that a policy of independence and neutrality best serves the interests of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, as also the pacification of the Balkans.”

M. Andrić then repeated once more<sup>3</sup> that non-acceptance of the chairmanship for the next session of the Council of the League of Nations should be regarded as a step towards dissociation from the League of Nations, on the lines of the desires expressed by Germany. The Yugoslav Government did not consider it wise, also on grounds of domestic policy, to proceed in too obvious a manner; but they did wish gradually to arrive at something like Japan's present position, that is, only to take part in the technical, humanitarian, and similar organizations of the League of Nations, and not the political.

I received with a certain amount of scepticism the Minister's statement that the Bled communiqué had already led to some dissociation from the Balkan Pact, and gave him to understand by my questions that the non-acceptance of the chairmanship for the Council did not necessarily bear the significance which he attached to it.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 474.

<sup>2</sup> Issued after the Bled conversations. See document No. 673, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> According to a minute by Ribbentrop of July 8 (not printed, 8418/E592815), the Minister had made this statement to him. Andrić also made it to Weizsäcker, according to a memorandum by the latter, St.S. No. 544 of July 8 (not printed, 8418/E592812), and elaborated on it on instructions from his Government. The substance of Weizsäcker's memorandum was transmitted to the Legation at Belgrade and Consulate General at Geneva in despatch Pol. I Vbd. 305 of July 10 (not printed, 8418/E592813-14).

## No. 676

1570/380043

*Ambassador Welzeck to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

PARIS, July 15, 1939.

DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: With reference to my today's report No. A 3113,<sup>1</sup> I also report that Herr Franz Langer, the official in charge for foreign questions on the staff of the German Labour Front, who has been holding discussions here, on the instructions of Ley,<sup>2</sup> with Minister Pomaret's<sup>3</sup> competent officials, namely M. Charron and M. Pignatel, about a return visit of German workers to France, called on me today and informed me that he had been told in confidence that the Ambassador had always been opposed to the illegal French diplomacy carried on by Abetz on the instructions of his Chief, and was not unconnected with intrigues against Abetz. As Herr Langer acts as liaison officer with the Büro Ribbentrop, he is going to report this outrageous defamation of my character to that quarter. This information was perhaps given him for that purpose. Today is the third time that I have heard these poisonous tales from the most varied sources. I perceive from this how much weight my enemies attach to discrediting me in Berlin and so removing me from here.

With best wishes and in great haste,

Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

WELZECK

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Leader of the German Labour Front.

<sup>3</sup> French Minister of Labour.

## No. 677

34/23220

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

Moscow, July 16, 1939—1:25 a.m.

No. 132 of July 15

Received July 16—3:00 a.m.

With reference to my telegram of July 10.<sup>1</sup>

Mikoyan asked Hilger to call on him this evening and communicated the following:

Though the last interview had certainly clarified the situation considerably, nevertheless there still remained points requiring further clarification.

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 642.

He had, therefore, summoned the Deputy Trade Representative, Babarin, from Berlin to Moscow, had informed him of the views held here and instructed him to call on Schnurre in order to discuss with him direct the points that were still not clear. Babarin had left for Berlin again yesterday. He—Mikoyan—hoped that the Schnurre-Babarin interview would bring about the final clarification which was still lacking. He would take further decisions in the light of Babarin's report and inform us of these in due course.

Mikoyan's attitude shows again that the Soviet Government in no case intend to allow the contact with us to be disrupted but that, at the moment, they are still chary of entering into actual economic negotiations which could not be concealed from the public.

SCHULENBURG

### No. 678

2997/587581

#### *The Ambassador in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 5705

SAN SEBASTIAN, July 16, 1939.

Received July 19.

Pol. IX 1565.

Subject: Re-election of President Roosevelt.

Generalissimo Franco tells me that when Count Ciano visited him in San Sebastian<sup>1</sup> he also discussed with him a number of special questions of foreign policy, among them that of President Roosevelt's extremely hostile attitude towards the totalitarian States.

Franco informed me that he had told Count Ciano, and wished to tell me as well, that he thought vigorous propaganda against Roosevelt urgently necessary to prevent him from being re-elected President. According to reliable information which he had, influence should be brought to bear on the Vatican, which had great influence over the American Catholics, who were opponents of Roosevelt's policy of intervention and thus of his war policy. By reasoning that Roosevelt's re-election would endanger world peace, strong feeling against him could be engendered through the Vatican and the American Catholics.

STOHRER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 663.

## No. 679

1625/989108

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 252 of July 17

LONDON, July 17, 1939—9:27 p.m.

Received July 17—11:40 p.m.

Pol. II 2575.

With reference to my telegram No. 241 of July 12.<sup>1</sup>

The British Ambassador in Moscow has, I hear from an entirely reliable source, received instructions<sup>2</sup> not to make further concessions to Soviet wishes on

- 1) the question of indirect aggression,
- 2) the question of a military pact.

As regards 1): The Soviet Government have demanded that the undertaking by Britain and France to render assistance should also become operative if, in any of the States whose integrity is declared a vital issue by one of the contracting Parties, a change of Government takes place under military pressure from without. Should, for instance, one of the border States feel that it might be able to escape military threats from Germany by putting a Government in power to please Germany, this, too, would have to be regarded as indirect aggression. It appears that this broad interpretation of the term "aggression" has vividly brought home to the British and French Governments the possibilities of Soviet Russian aggression.

As regards 2): The Soviet Government's demand for the simultaneous conclusion of political and military agreements has probably also been interpreted in a similar sense.

If agreement is not reached on the two aforementioned questions, the British Government would prefer to confine themselves to the conclusion of an agreement on direct aggression. The British Government think that they may conclude from the negotiations as conducted so far that Soviet Russia would be agreeable to this.

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 657.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 329.

## No. 680

504/234941

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in  
Yugoslavia*

Telegram

No. 183 of July 17

BERLIN, July 17, 1939—9:30 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 4184.<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Counsellor Mohrmann.

In connection with the Prince Regent's visit to London<sup>2</sup> rumours are multiplying, apparently predominantly from Hungarian and Bulgarian sources, about Yugoslavia breaking away to the Western Powers. There is talk of French and British arms credits, the despatch of Yugoslav gold reserves to London and of more intensive and successful propaganda by the Western Powers in Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav Minister in Rome<sup>3</sup> is said to have made a complete turnabout in his hitherto friendly attitude to the Axis since his return from Belgrade.

Please report by telegram, especially about the alleged despatch of the gold reserves.<sup>4</sup>

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8440/E594107); in this telegram, No. 210 of July 15 from Budapest, Erdmannsdorff reported information which he had from Csáky on an alleged change in the attitude of the Yugoslav Minister in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> The Prince Regent and his wife paid a private visit to London, July 17–Aug. 2, 1939. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 393.

<sup>3</sup> B. Christić.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "Herr Brücklmeier reports that the Foreign Minister wishes an enquiry made about the alleged despatch of the gold reserves. W[öermann]."

## No. 681

1724/401050–51

*Minute by the Director of the Foreign Affairs Department  
of the Danzig Senate*<sup>1</sup>

DANZIG, July 17, 1939.

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN PRESIDENT GREISER AND THE  
HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS, PROFESSOR  
BURCKHARDT.

The general situation was discussed.

The High Commissioner emphasized that he was glad to know that the President was back in Danzig, for in his absence the atmosphere was always somewhat tense. He had also been assured by many

<sup>1</sup> Copies of this minute and of the documents printed as Nos. 686 and 693 were circulated to the State Secretary, the Under State Secretary and the Deputy Director of the Political Department with a minute by Schliep of July 24 (not printed, 1724/401035).

sections of the Danzig population that they felt President Greiser had a quieting effect and that whilst he was there, no wrong decisions could be taken.

President Greiser replied that he desired to contribute, as far as was in his power, to calming the situation and to tranquil developments. Incidentally, the course he had been on had gone well and he had found plenty of work waiting for him which he must now deal with.

The High Commissioner then expounded his views on the international situation as he saw it, and emphasized that he still had confidence in Lord Halifax. He did not think there would be a war because he did not believe that the tripartite pact between Britain, France and Russia would come to pass. He had received news from Soviet Russia which indicated a development towards a National Communist Russian State there.

He then said that some days ago he had been asked by Herr Zarske<sup>2</sup> to call on the Gauleiter and that he had seen him yesterday. The Gauleiter had shown him his new house and had then told him that he would be flying to see the Führer<sup>3</sup> in his new private aeroplane. He now had full powers for any decision and was the sole ruler in Danzig. He wished to obtain the Führer's decision as to whether he should have a conversation with Minister Chodacki. He could indeed tell the Führer that this was Chodacki's wish. In the event of the Führer's approval Burckhardt should make his house available for the meeting, but no ladies should be present and Burckhardt should retire immediately after dinner.

The High Commissioner then said that of course he had agreed to this suggestion and that he was ready in principle to do everything which could serve a settlement. He was, however, surprised at the way this suggestion was put to him.<sup>4</sup>

DR. BÖTTCHER

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<sup>2</sup> Editor of the *Danziger Vorposten*.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 693.

<sup>4</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 333.

## No. 682

259/169662

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 576

BERLIN, July 17, 1939.

When I informed the British Ambassador today of the substance of the correspondence between Bonnet and the Reich Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> on the French attitude in the German-Polish question, it was evident

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 602 and 669.



that Henderson already knew the contents of Bonnet's Note. Of the Reich Foreign Minister's reply the Ambassador took note without special interest. He merely added that this line of reasoning was already familiar to him from his conversations with me. He expressed his thanks, however, for the information.

On the subject of a press truce<sup>2</sup> when the British Parliament goes into recess, Henderson said that it would be useful also to have a truce in speeches, declarations etc., etc. In a word, his wish was that in the next few weeks the point of view of foreign policy should take precedence over that of British home policy. I told the Ambassador once again that all such public pronouncements were, after all, the results of the political facts. If Britain arranged the latter in such a manner as not to get in our way, then no truce in newspaper articles, speeches etc. would be needed. As a negative example, I told him that we had in the past concluded a press agreement with Poland which, in the present political situation, was naturally worthless. Henderson admitted that between totalitarian and democratic States a press truce was usually adhered to by only one side.

When Henderson again mentioned the Goebbels article attacking the King-Hall letters, I told Henderson once more on my own responsibility that where he was concerned the Foreign Ministry naturally remained the proper authority and that a conversation between Henderson and Reich Minister Goebbels was not desired.

Another noteworthy point in this conversation was that Henderson said he had urged London finally to come to a conclusion with the Russians one way or another. He is of opinion that these negotiations are disturbing matters between Berlin and London. It is true that Henderson did not mention that any new step was planned in British policy after the conclusion of these negotiations, but nevertheless such an idea was discernible.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 671.

<sup>3</sup> For Sir Neville Henderson's account of this conversation, see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 344.

## No. 683

30/151991-92

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, July 17, 1939.

### DELIVERIES OF ARMS TO YUGOSLAVIA

The Yugoslav Minister today made the following statement on Yugoslav requests for arms.

- 1) The request for delivery of 108 75 mm. anti-aircraft guns and

200 anti-tank guns, on which he had approached State Secretary von Weizsäcker on June 27,<sup>1</sup> had in the meantime also been submitted by him direct to General Thomas of the War Economy Staff, through his Military Attaché.

The General had promised to examine the matter and to reply in a few days. (The War Economy Staff have informed us that the Führer's decision is being obtained and that therefore a reply is not possible before July 18.)

2) As to aircraft, the Yugoslav Government had on April 5 placed orders for

50 Dornier 215 planes

50 Messerschmidt planes

34 Fieseler planes

to be delivered in July, August and September of this year. He had instructions to ask that these deliveries should be made promptly.

On June 23 the Yugoslav Government had invited tenders for a further

50 Messerschmidt 109s, and

50 Dornier 215s,

which in the meantime had been submitted to them. No orders seemed so far to have been placed. The Yugoslav Government were concerned to obtain these aircraft, too, as soon as possible. Delivery could perhaps be made from German stocks, as the deliveries intended for Turkey would presumably not be made now, and they would therefore be available for Yugoslavia, or so at least the Yugoslav Military Attaché here thought. When I asked which of these deliveries were to be carried out under the provisions of the Protocol on an armaments credit signed last week in Belgrade,<sup>2</sup> the Minister replied that he did not know; the details would have to be discussed by the experts.

The Minister then commented at length on the political significance of Yugoslavia's requests for arms: the Yugoslav Government had, as was known, adopted a definite attitude, which had also found public expression in the communiqué on the recent meeting of the Bulgarian and Yugoslav Foreign Ministers at Bled.<sup>3</sup> According to paragraph 3 of this protocol, both Governments were determined to pursue a policy of neutrality and independence. Neutrality, however, did not mean a passive, but an active attitude, and we must enable the Yugoslav Government to put this into practice by supplying the arms requested. Otherwise, as a result of her publicly declared attitude, Yugoslavia might see herself stripped of arms. This would make the position of the Foreign Minister, Cincar-Marković, in particular, considerably more difficult.

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum, St.S. No. 515 of June 27 (not printed, 230/151971), Weizsäcker recorded that Andrić, on instructions, had conveyed a request from his Foreign Minister to Ribbentrop for his assistance in obtaining the smooth delivery of this war material.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 620.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 675.

I promised the Minister to bring these remarks of his to the notice of the Foreign Minister too. Enquiries instituted about the anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns since his conversation with State Secretary von Weizsäcker had revealed that no contracts for these deliveries existed yet. These guns and the aforementioned aircraft were particularly important and modern material; our own requirements here must naturally also play a considerable part. Thereupon, the Minister again emphasized his political points and hinted that, in the present situation, it would undoubtedly make a strange impression on world opinion if the Yugoslav Government had to place the orders elsewhere, e.g. for artillery material in Sweden.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

Enquiries about the attitude of the military authorities are still in progress.

WIEHL

### No. 684

331/195915-16

#### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 18, 1939.

The requests by the British, French and American Governments for the granting of an *exequatur* for a Consul General at Prague were, as you are aware, refused, because these three Powers had coupled their requests for the *exequatur* with an express statement that they adhered to their non-recognition of the Protectorate.<sup>1</sup> This was done in Britain by a statement in Parliament, by France through a written statement in the Note applying for the *exequatur*, and by the United States orally when requesting the *exequatur*.

The three Powers have now let it be understood through their representatives in Berlin that they are seeking a way out of this confused situation, which would mean approaching our point of view. The form this approach is to take has not yet been decided. From the conversations with the American and French Chargés d'Affaires it appears possible that they will make a fresh application for the *exequatur* without coupling it in any way with the question of recognition. The British Government seem to be prepared to give an agreement over the Czech gold, on which preliminary negotiations have already taken place, a form which could be regarded as a tacit *de facto* recognition.

The American and French Governments have moreover referred to our desire to maintain trade between the Protectorate and their countries, which would, however, be impossible if there were no Consuls at Prague to verify the invoices, etc.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 672.

At present, our economic interests as far as the United States are concerned are not great; but as regards France and especially Great Britain, they are considerable.

In actual fact, the situation is such that the Consulates of the three Powers are at present still functioning even without the grant of an *exequatur* to the Head of the Mission. It has, however, been under consideration to set a definite time limit for the three Powers, after which all consular activity would have to cease.

In the circumstances it is suggested that the three Powers be informed that, in view of their efforts to settle the matter, we will for the time being refrain from closing the Consulates. It would be for them to find a suitable way out in the meantime. In the case of Britain, this could possibly be found in the conclusion of the aforementioned agreement, in the case of France and the United States in the request for an *exequatur* without its being coupled with the question of recognition.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary.

WOERMANN

## No. 685

2208/474355-59

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, July 18, 1939.

e.o. W 1145 g.

The Soviet Trade Representative in Berlin, Babarin, called on me today, with two members of the Trade Delegation, to discuss with me further questions still outstanding as indicated to our Embassy by People's Commissar Mikoyan.<sup>1</sup> Babarin began by enlarging upon the need, as seen from the Soviet side, for extending and intensifying German-Soviet economic relations. I also expressed the same wish on our side.

Babarin then read out the enclosed statement which does not actually correspond to the state of the negotiations and places a construction favourable to the Soviet point of view on Hilger's communication to Mikoyan.<sup>2</sup> He said it was his task to clarify with me the various points specified in the enclosure. If our discussions resulted in a clarification, he was empowered to sign the treaty here in Berlin. He asked whether we agreed to this. I reserved my attitude towards this astonishing statement of Babarin's and drew his attention to the fact that the *modus procedendi* proposed by him was in contradiction to our offer, originally proposed by People's Commissar Mikoyan himself, to nego-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 677.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 628 and 642.

tiate in Moscow. Babarin added that the question as to whether signature was to take place in Moscow or Berlin could perhaps be decided later, the main thing was the clarification of points still at issue. It could, however, quite obviously be gathered from his communications that the Soviet Government preferred unobtrusive negotiations by Babarin in Berlin to any negotiations by us in Moscow with People's Commissar Mikoyan, which would have the widest publicity. To this extent Babarin's instructions are in contradiction to Mikoyan's statements to our Embassy (cf. Embassy telegram No. 132 of July 15).<sup>1</sup>

Before further conversations with the Russians, the question has, therefore, to be decided as to whether we are to adopt the method of negotiation now chosen by the Soviets and to negotiate in Berlin. The economic and political aspects of the negotiations are the decisive factor in forming an opinion on this question.

1). The economic aspect.

German-Soviet negotiations in Berlin have the disadvantage, very inconvenient to us, of being slow and complicated, as the Soviet negotiators in Berlin must refer every trifling matter to Moscow and have themselves no scope at all. Negotiations in the real sense are therefore hardly possible. It is rather an exchange of statements, a method which is naturally particularly inconvenient in view of the difficulty of the questions now under discussion. It cannot be foreseen if and when it will be possible to reach an agreement. On the other hand Babarin today gave way on some important points. The Soviet raw material supplies have been raised from 160 million RM to 170 million RM and have also been improved in quality. As to other outstanding questions, guarantee on the Reichsmark exchange rate, delivery periods, shipping clause, the two points of view have approached each other more closely. A number of other, in some cases very difficult, questions still remain open (interest, make-up of German deliveries, increased deliveries of Russian raw materials, possibly for gold). A chance of eventually attaining an economically sound treaty undoubtedly exists so that, from a purely economic point of view, the negotiations should be continued, even though the conditions in Berlin are inconvenient for us. In so doing we should endeavour possibly to transfer the negotiations from time to time to Moscow, which, if definite progress is made, would not seem impossible.

2). The political aspect.

The political effect which negotiations in Moscow would have will be absent, since negotiations in Berlin will presumably not be known to the general public and the Soviet negotiators here, by contrast to Moscow, are not a responsible Minister but officials without authority. On the other hand, the political effect of the conclusion of a German-Soviet treaty at the present moment would remain to its full extent. If the treaty comes into existence on the basis we have in mind, it will

be weighty enough to bring about a closer cooperation between Germany and the Soviet Union, at any rate in the economic sphere, a fact which will not fail to have its effect at least in Poland and Britain. If we pursue the aim of normalizing and improving German-Soviet relations, further negotiations, even if concluded in Berlin, will be along the lines of such a policy.

SCHNURRE

[Enclosure]

Germany has accepted the Soviet draft for a credit agreement as a basis for negotiations and, in accordance with the statements of Herr Hilger, made by him on the 10th instant, has acceded to the Soviet requests on the following points:

- 1). Germany has extended the term of credit up to seven years.
- 2). As we understand Herr Hilger's statements, Germany is willing to meet the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the matter of interest on the credit which has now been fixed at the rate of 4.5 per cent.
- 3). Germany has accepted the Soviet lists of goods required.

The Soviet Union is ready to meet Germany on some of the questions outstanding and considers it possible:

- 1). To accept the German proposal about the rate of the Mark together with the gold clause, on condition that we are compensated for the full difference in the exchange rate of the Mark, both in respect of the sums deposited with German banks in cash by the Trade Delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and of the payments for Soviet goods sold before the exchange rate of the Mark altered.

- 2). To increase Soviet deliveries to RM 170,000,000, within two years.

- 3). To accept the German proposal for placing orders on credit within a period of two years from the conclusion of the agreement, on condition that, within the first year, orders to an amount of at least 120,000,000 RM are placed.

- 4). To agree that 50 to 60 per cent of German supplies should be carried in German ships, if such are made available at freightage rates which are approved and normal under the freightage situation prevailing in respect of the carriage of goods between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Germany.

The Soviet Union would like to have the views of the German Government.

## No. 686

1724/401036-41

*Memorandum by the President of the Danzig Senate*

DANZIG, July 18, 1939.

I attended a luncheon yesterday on the invitation of the High Commissioner, Professor Burckhardt,<sup>1</sup> at which, apart from Minister Chodacki, M. Smogorzewski, the Berlin representative of the *Gazeta Polska* (also well known as the Director of the Polish counter propaganda against the German Corridor propaganda), were present. There was the opportunity of engaging in an informal general discussion and afterwards I had a separate conversation with M. Smogorzewski and Minister Chodacki, each alone.

(1) *Smogorzewski*

He emphasized at the beginning his loyalty and his friendly relations with many gentlemen of the Third Reich, whom he mentioned by name, and he emphasized expressly that he would in the next few days travel by car from Danzig to Berlin in order to return to his post. He clearly wished to have a political conversation in which I exercised great reserve, so that practically only Smogorzewski talked. He declared that M. Lipski had endeavoured for years to come to an understanding with the Reich on Danzig. The Reich had always described the Danzig affair as being more or less unimportant in the German-Polish situation and of a provincial character. The declarations by the Reich Chancellor in his speech in the Reichstag<sup>2</sup> were therefore surprising, particularly since, after the Czech affair, the fear of surprises had become extremely great. He repeatedly declared that we were all Europeans, and that, over and above the tasks given to each nation and people, and their ordinary national duties, we also had European obligations. These could be particularly clearly recognized if one went to America, and he, for his part, intended to travel to America again for the winter, and further to the Far East in order to get a proper picture again. From this fact could be seen how strongly he believed that there would be no worsening of the German-Polish situation. It looked black, however, for next year if no visible sign of European cooperation should be seen coming from the German side. He knew Germany and National Socialism very well, but it must not be forgotten that the democratic States were great, powerful factors. He then referred further to Danzig and was of the opinion that one could speak of a reorganization of things in Danzig, but unilateral action by Germany

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 333.

<sup>2</sup> On Apr. 28. See Editors' Note on p. 355.

in an attempt to occupy Danzig would be in itself a *casus belli* for Poland as well as for Britain.

He answered my question whether Poland would be willing to allow a motor road through Pommerellen for East Prussia by saying that we could have not one but three motor roads, but only as transit roads and not, as demanded up to the present, as extraterritorial roads.

On my giving a prearranged sign, Professor Burekhardt came over and took M. Smogorzewski into another room, as I was having too much of him.

(2) *Minister Chodacki*

We discussed thoroughly and frankly, as we had also done previously, the present-day problems. In this I also adopted the tactics of letting M. Chodacki do most of the talking and of stimulating him again and again by questions.

M. Chodacki told me that he had been in Warsaw, and that, not only in conversations with Foreign Minister Beck, but during visits to Marshal Rydz-Smigly and to President Mościcki, which he had attended, his present duties in Danzig had now been very clearly defined, in such a way that everything which had taken place in Danzig was to be overlooked. They knew exactly how many troops and how many guns, etc. were available. Everything was neatly arranged, ready for publication, but they did not wish to make use of it for the moment because greater things were at stake. As regards the Danzig problem, Poland was still ready to enter into negotiations and to make certain arrangements. Nevertheless a unilateral return of Danzig to the Reich would represent a decisive *casus belli* for Poland.

I then asked him several times how Poland visualized receiving British help, apart from the financial sphere, and especially military assistance.

He cautiously and cleverly dodged this question every time, merely emphasizing again and again that Britain was now manufacturing 1,500 aircraft per month, that Britain already had a territorial army of one million men, that the cooperation of the democratic military Powers was very close, as had already emerged from the agreement on a joint high command made in time of peace, and from the fact that Britain had sufficient aircraft and aircraft carriers to be able to give Poland effective assistance. He then said that, in the last resort, it was no longer a matter of Danzig, but that Danzig was merely put forward as a means to an end. The present atmosphere in Europe was pretty unbearable for everybody. It could only become tolerable again when Germany understood that, apart from herself, other States had also the right to exist and wanted to live. The mistake should not be made of comparing Poland with the former Czecho-Slovakia. German foreign policy had been conducted consistently for years and had excited



admiration, especially in Poland. The incorporation of Czechia, however, was a decisive mistake because it departed from the ethnic line. As a result of this, great distrust of Germany had been aroused in all European countries. In his opinion the present sultry atmosphere in Europe could only be cleared by removing this distrust. Germany had enjoyed confidence everywhere, and today she met with nothing but distrust. It would therefore be very difficult to win confidence again and it would need some sign which could be taken to mean willingness to cooperate with other nations. He said further that today in Poland the whole nation stood together as one man and would also fight. The credit for this national unity in Poland was not due to Polish leadership alone, he would say that quite openly, but was for the greater part due to German propaganda.

When I objected that, at this precise moment in Poland, a predominantly provocative propaganda was being conducted with claims for German territories of long standing, he replied that such student circles should not be taken seriously. Naturally they were being let alone at present for propaganda reasons.

M. Chodacki then said that he had heard that Gauleiter Forster wished to meet him.<sup>3</sup> He was very pleased about this for he had been ready to have such a talk for years, but it had not been welcomed. He was only surprised that Gauleiter Forster first had to obtain the approval of Reich Chancellor Hitler for having such a conversation. M. Chodacki emphasized further that he was ready at any time not only to talk to me privately about these matters, but also officially, but that the initiative must come from the Danzig side. He further emphasized that in his opinion developments in Danzig could, even today, be put right, if the Polish rights were to be acknowledged in all respects.

When I asked whether I could regard this as meaning readiness to negotiate, he answered that I could so regard it. To my question as to whether I could make official use of this information, which he had given to me privately, he replied by saying that I could also make official use of it. I told him that I would report on this conversation to Berlin.

GREISER

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 681.

No. 687

799/273311

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 19, 1939.

St.S. No. 577

Yesterday I submitted to the Foreign Minister that it appeared to

me that the decision on the proposed naval visit to Danzig<sup>1</sup> was a matter for the Foreign Minister. I would suggest that the Foreign Minister should submit the matter to the Führer before July 22. For we must always bear in mind that a solution of the Danzig question might occur by force of arms, and that we must put the blame for this on the Poles, while the despatch of this naval unit to Danzig would be interpreted internationally as a prelude to the generally awaited German-Polish conflict.

In the course of the conversation, the Foreign Minister reached the same view as I had represented, that the visit should in no case take place without informing the Italians and not before August 4.

I transmitted the Minister's views also to Counsellor Hewel in his hotel in Salzburg the same evening.

Herewith to

Under State Secretary Woermann for his personal information. But I request that the contents of the above memorandum should not go further (not even to Herr von Nostitz).<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 635.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum to Weizsäcker of July 14 (not printed, 97/108423) Nostitz stated that Vice-Admiral Schniewind had telephoned to enquire whether the Foreign Minister still intended, after receipt of document No. 635, to discuss the political aspects of the proposed visit with the Führer again; Schniewind had further stated that the High Command of the Navy intended to ask the Führer on July 22 whether and in what form the visit was to take place. In a memorandum of the same date (97/108422), of which a copy was sent to Ribbentrop, Weizsäcker replied as follows: "Please reply to Vice-Admiral Schniewind that I take it for certain that the Foreign Minister will again be reporting to the Führer on the naval visit to Danzig in due course. I will therefore inform the Foreign Minister that the Navy desires that the political aspect of the visit be clarified with the Führer before July 22."

## No. 688

174/185989-91

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 19, 1939.

The Japanese Counsellor of Embassy, who had apparently been sent by his Ambassador to obtain information, called on me today and began the conversation with a very detailed description of the latest events on the frontier between Manchukuo and Outer Mongolia. These events had taken place where the river, usually marked on maps with the name Halahaho, forms the frontier. It was true that there were no clear agreements about the frontier demarcation there but in actual practice the river had been recognized as the frontier. Since last April, at first Outer Mongolian troops, who were later joined by Soviet Russian troops also, had repeatedly been moving on to the eastern bank of the river. At the same time Outer Mongolian or Russian aircraft had

often appeared over Manchurian territory. In one particular instance an aircraft had ventured far into the country and had dropped bombs on a bridge about 30 to 40 km. east of Tsitsihar. Finally the Mongols and Russians had appeared east of the river with fairly large formations including motorized troops and tanks. This had finally developed into a regular battle with fairly large formations, in which the Japanese had kept the upper hand. Hostilities had however not yet ceased all along the line. The Eastern Mongolians and Russians had lost many thousand men and several hundred aircraft. Japanese troops had also intervened on the Manchurian side. Total losses on this side amounted to about a thousand men. As to the reasons for this Russian action the Japanese Government could only conjecture. The purpose of the action might have been to ascertain whether the Japanese were still strong in Manchuria after the hostilities in China. Another possibility might be to give the British a certain amount of moral support in relation to the events in Tientsin. A third version was that, in view of the negotiations in Moscow, the Russians had wanted to show that they were not interested in events in Europe but that their eyes were turned to the Far East. Finally it was even asserted that the Russians wanted to cause difficulties between the Anti-Comintern Powers by this means.

Here Mr. Usami had obviously reached the point to which he had been working round. He first enquired about what information we had on the Anglo-Franco-Russian negotiations. I gave him our information about the negotiations of the Western Powers with Moscow, which tallied with his. He then asked, very insistently, about our relations with the Soviet Union. He drew attention, among other things, to reports in the *News Chronicle*, that a non-aggression pact was being negotiated between Germany and Russia, and he mentioned the rumours of German personages being sent to Moscow.

I replied that all these reports were pure fabrication. It was true that we were in contact with the Soviet Union about economic conversations. The volume of our trade had shrunk from the very considerable figure of previous years to an insignificant amount. There were things in Russia which would be very useful to us, so that a certain revival in our economic relations was quite natural. It had not gone beyond preliminary diplomatic conversations which had been held partly in Moscow and partly in Berlin. Mr. Usami then asked about details of the German credits granted to the Soviet Union in previous years. I referred him to Herr Wiehl for further information on this question.

Mr. Usami then spoke as follows: Economic conversations were of course also taking place at present between Germany and Japan.<sup>1</sup> Japan was exceptionally well able to take German machinery. Our negotiators had declared that the German capacity was limited and that in

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<sup>1</sup> A trade agreement was initialled on July 28; see Editors' Note on p. 1012.

consequence of home requirements certain machinery could not be delivered. It would thus make an extremely painful impression in Japan if the machinery which was being denied to Japan were now to go to the Soviet Union. I referred Mr. Usami to Herr Wiehl on this point also.<sup>2</sup>

In conclusion the Counsellor of Embassy reverted once more to the rumours of a political *rapprochement* between Germany and the Soviet Union and said he thought it would be a good thing if reassuring statements were to be made in Tokyo. The Embassy for their part had already reported to this effect.

In the course of the conversation, I also mentioned, in response to questions on the subject, that it was a matter of public knowledge that the German press was not attacking the Soviet Union to the same extent as hitherto, and represented this as in no way sensational, if only because the Soviet Union and Poland were neighbours.

WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 704 and 756.

### No. 689

585/242459-60

#### *The Minister in Bulgaria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 107 of July 20

SOFIA, July 20, 1939—7:50 p.m.

Received July 20—11:30 p.m.

The Minister President, to whom I yesterday paid my first visit since my return, expressed special pleasure at the beneficial effects of his Berlin visit<sup>1</sup> on the general morale in Bulgaria. The friendly reception in Berlin had increased Bulgaria's self-confidence, had removed the depressing feeling of isolation and had given the country the consciousness of having strong protection. Even the Opposition seemed satisfied with the result. He condemned all the more the visit of the President of the Sobranye to Paris and London.<sup>2</sup> It was true that M. Moshanov had had this plan in view for a long time, but to put it into effect at the present juncture was only calculated to lead to misconstruction and to arouse our mistrust. The King had caused Moshanov to be asked to abandon the journey, but the latter had paid no attention and had set off whilst he, the Minister President, was already on his way back. Thereupon he had summoned the Ministers in London and Paris<sup>3</sup> to

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 617 and 618.

<sup>2</sup> Stoitchko Moshanov visited London for a few days in July 1939. He had an audience with the King, and conversations with Lord Halifax and Sir Frederick Leith-Ross on July 20; he went on to Paris. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 393 and 534, and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 633, 636 and 681.

<sup>3</sup> Nikola Momtchilov and Nikola Balabanov.

Sofia and instructed the Legations there to take no notice of the trip. The disloyal conduct of M. Moshanov would yet have repercussions on politics at home although he did not attribute any great significance to the visit as such. He thought that Moshanov, after having taken part as leader of the Bulgarian delegation in the Führer's birthday celebrations, now merely wanted, by means of this journey, to make a gesture to the other side.

The Minister President showed little satisfaction over the outcome of his discussions at Bled.<sup>4</sup> Yugoslavia had explained her refusal to denounce the Balkan Pact by saying that it was better to be in than out of the Pact in order to keep watch on, and, if need be, direct its development. He had not even been able to obtain a definite answer to his question as to what Yugoslavia would do if Turkey attacked Bulgaria. The latent distrust here of the Yugoslav Government had flared up anew through the Prince Regent's visit to London.<sup>5</sup> He had now sent his Minister back to London to find out, if possible, what had been discussed there, for, in the course of the social functions, Chamberlain and Halifax had undoubtedly had the opportunity of getting at the Prince Regent.

The Minister President told me in conclusion that reports of Turkish military preparations on the Thracian frontier were so disquieting that, in spite of harvest work, the Government had had to decide to call up four classes of reservists from Southern Bulgaria. Furthermore, they had concentrated the Labour Service on the Eastern frontier in order rapidly to complete the construction of the line of defence and were now concentrating four divisions on the Turkish frontier. Reports by deserters about Turkish preparations indicated that the Turks were perhaps intending, by precipitating a frontier incident, to capture the heights of Sakar, which would be important for the establishment of an overland link between Thrace and Rumania. If the Turks should make any such attempt, Bulgaria would by no means look on inactive, but would fight. He hoped that the 1,000 machine guns for which he had recently asked<sup>6</sup> could be delivered soon.

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 675.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 680. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 628.

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 659.

## No. 690

1570/380050-51

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 375 of July 20

PARIS, July 20, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 21—12:30 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 316 of July 15 [16].<sup>2</sup>

I made the *démarche* in the Abetz affair this afternoon to Minister President Daladier, restating our arguments in the most energetic and insistent manner. In particular, I again showed that there was absolutely no justification for this measure and that it must be attributed to a misunderstanding or to slander. Here I also referred to the press campaign tolerated by the French Government, which represented Abetz as a spy and cast aspersions upon his honour. Apart from withdrawing the expulsion order, the French Government also owed Abetz a declaration of his *bona fides*. Daladier here interjected that no expulsion order had been served and stated literally that Herr Abetz had not been expelled at all, but had only been courteously requested to leave French territory. I took note of the statement that no expulsion order had been served adding the remark that Abetz was, as far as I knew, in France, and most probably in the South, which led Daladier to an exclamation of the greatest surprise. I met his attempt to take strong exception to the re-entry by referring to Daladier's own statement that indeed no valid expulsion order existed. I then insisted on a clear promise that in future there would be no further impediment to Herr Abetz's presence in France. Daladier then again reverted to the case and said that fundamental discrepancies existed between the statements of Herr Abetz about what he had said on the Danzig question and statements by responsible persons who had spoken with and listened to Herr Abetz, which were available to the French Government and which tallied with each other. The French Government had no doubt that Herr Abetz had represented in alarmist terms German action against Danzig as imminent and that his activities had revealed propagandist designs. Thereupon I repeated that only slander or misunderstanding could account for this and that in any case there were no grounds at all for restricting the residence of a deserving champion of Franco-German understanding and a friend and collaborator of many years' standing of the Reich Foreign Minister. I must therefore regard the Abetz case as closed and could only stress my demand that the slanderous press campaign against Herr Abetz be brought to an end

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed; see document No. 664, footnote 4.

by all possible means. Daladier said he would re-examine the case at an early date.

In case of Abetz's re-entry, which the press here has already reported as imminent on the strength of a Belga agency report, the question of his residence permit would certainly be cleared up most rapidly. In the event of incidents, Abetz will be afforded protection by his being my guest in the Embassy building.

WELCZECK

## No. 691

504/234943-45

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 7 Bled

BLED, July 20, 1939.

Received July 22.

Pol. IV 4304.

With reference to my telegrams No. 212 of July 18 and No. 216 of July 19.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Yugoslav foreign policy.

According to what I have meantime learned from a reliable source, the Yugoslav National Bank is supposed to have actually effected the transfers of gold to Britain in the middle or at the end of last March, therefore probably in connection with the general political tension arising from the solution of the Czech problem. It has not been possible to find out anything more precise about the extent or purpose of these transfers.

The reason for the Prince Regent's journey to London is said to have been, in the first place, purely private. One of the Prince Regent's two sons, who are at school in England, had, as I hear, to undergo a tonsils operation, and the Prince Regent and his wife wished to be present. At the same time this gave the parents the opportunity of taking their sons back with them to Yugoslavia for the holidays.

If these private reasons did, as I assume, in fact provide the immediate reason for the journey, I still consider it perfectly possible that the Prince Regent may, on political grounds too, have gladly made use of the opportunity for personal contacts in London. I am sure that he still ardently desires to be able to contribute to a *détente* in German-British relations and that he will endeavour in London to further this end as far as possible. The impressions he has gained in Berlin will naturally play a special part in this.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (504/234942 and 8440/E594108). These telegrams were in reply to document No. 680. The first, whilst describing signs of French and British attempts to win over Yugoslavia, stated that no confirmation of the reports of transfers of gold was available; the second reported that enquiries were being pursued.

<sup>2</sup> For this visit, see document No. 474.

It is clear that every effort will be made on the British side to give the Prince Regent a picture of the general situation as seen through British spectacles. I do not, however, think that any British attempts to win over Yugoslavia for the British policy of encirclement could have any success, as the immediate danger for Yugoslavia resulting therefrom is all too obvious. I am convinced that both the Prince Regent and the Foreign Minister, Cincar-Marković, understand this perfectly clearly. That the two most influential persons in Yugoslav foreign policy today realize this, seems to me the best guarantee for the maintenance of the Yugoslav policy of neutrality. Moreover all politically influential groups in the country, and also the army, fully realize that only by placing herself in mortal peril could Yugoslavia pursue a policy directed against the Axis Powers. Contrary tendencies, which find expression in the press under Left Wing influence, play no decisive part by comparison.

So, although, in my view, we can continue to depend on Yugoslavia refusing, despite lively Anglo-French propaganda, to be drawn into commitments to the camp of the Western democracies, we must, on the other hand, still always allow for the inclination to avoid any visible link with the Axis. Yugoslav foreign policy has never concealed its aim of avoiding, for as long as possible, being drawn into a dispute between the Great Powers, and of ensuring that, if it comes to a European conflict, Yugoslavia for once obtains the role of a war profiteer. Consequently the Yugoslavs are prepared, in their own interests, in the event of a conflict between the Great Powers, to sell the products of their country in the same markets as in peacetime, but they would resolutely oppose anything tantamount to an open breach of neutrality.

HEEREN

## No. 692

183/85932-34

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 585

BERLIN, July 20, 1939.

The Swiss Minister, to whom I recently spoke about the not entirely clear attitude of his Government to the Anglo-French guarantee action,<sup>1</sup> has been in Berne in connection with this matter, and has brought back, with the approval of the Federal Council, a Note which he handed to me. This is attached.

After looking through the Note, I told M. Frölicher that I wished to reserve my opinion. At first sight, this statement did not entirely satisfy me either, for we could not get away from the fact that the

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 666.



Swiss Minister in Paris in his two conversations, the substance of which we knew from the Swiss Government, had implicitly accepted the Anglo-French promise of guarantee. Nor did M. Frölicher today deny that the Swiss Minister in Paris had said, in the second conversation at the Quai d'Orsay too, that Switzerland must reserve her full right to decide when a case would arise under the guarantee. Therein lay, as I said to Frölicher, acceptance in principle of the guarantee.

In reply to this, Frölicher referred partly to his Note, partly to the "Guarantee of Swiss Neutrality", already pronounced in principle in 1815,<sup>2</sup> and partly also to the fact that Switzerland would adopt the same attitude towards a promise of guarantee by other countries, Germany for instance, as she had adopted to that by France; that is, she would make no comment, and this was not to be interpreted either as an acceptance or as a rejection. Frölicher seemed to think that the doubts I still entertained about the correctness of the Swiss attitude must be ascribed to Italian influence. The Italian Minister<sup>3</sup> had recently spoken to Federal Councillor Motta on similar lines. Hereupon I told M. Frölicher that my views did not derive from Italy, but were evidently identical with those of the Italians.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 384, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> Attilio Tamaro. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 469.

<sup>4</sup> See also *ibid.*, No. 637.

[Enclosure]

IV 1/3

SWISS LEGATION IN GERMANY  
BERLIN, JULY 20, 1939.

#### NOTE

The neutrality of Switzerland is universally recognized. Trust may be placed in the declarations made to her that this neutrality will be respected. Switzerland, therefore, is averse to being given any promises of help which apply if solemn assurances are violated. She relies rather on the protection of her neutrality by her own defence force.

The right of the Confederation to invoke the help of other States in the event of a breach of neutrality by a neighbour State is uncontested. Such help can, however, only be accorded in response to her explicit request; the unsolicited intervention of a third State must be viewed as a violation of neutrality. In so far as promises of help do not conflict with these principles, Switzerland has no occasion to comment on such declarations which she neither accepts nor rejects.

This has been Switzerland's attitude towards declarations concerned with the possible rendering of help by third States in the event of a violation of neutrality. The Federal Council has made no comment on such declarations, nor have they had occasion to do so.

## No. 693

1724/401052-53

*Minute by the Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of  
the Danzig Senate*

DANZIG, July 20, 1939.

RECORD OF A CONVERSATION WITH THE HIGH COMMISSIONER,  
PROFESSOR BURCKHARDT

The High Commissioner telephoned to ask me yesterday for the Danzig-Polish exchange of Notes during 1921 on Polish military transports through the territory of the Free City of Danzig, as the Gauleiter had requested him to get in touch with Minister Chodaacki on this.

I took him this exchange of Notes today and at the same time handed him for confidential use a minute on the legal position.<sup>1</sup>

I asked the High Commissioner whether the Gauleiter had called on him in person. He replied that, as he had already told me, the Gauleiter had sent Herr Zarske a few days ago with the request that he should come and see him.<sup>2</sup> He wanted to take this opportunity of also showing him over his new house. For this reason he had gone to see the Gauleiter. Yesterday morning at 9 o'clock the Gauleiter's Adjutant, Herr Strautmann, had rung him up and asked him to call on the Gauleiter at 10 o'clock. He had replied that, unfortunately, he was unable to do so. Nevertheless, he would be pleased to receive the Gauleiter at 12 o'clock. The Gauleiter had sent a message in reply that he was so busy with telephone conversations that, unfortunately, he was unable to come; could not he, Professor Burckhardt, manage to call on him after all? M. Burckhardt had intended to reply that in that case he would be at the disposal of the Gauleiter at any time on the following day. Meanwhile, however, the Gauleiter had sent a message by telephone that he would after all call on him, Professor Burckhardt, at 12 o'clock.

The Gauleiter had then told him that Germany would not relinquish her demands over Danzig but that developments could still wait for another year or two. In any case, everything was to be steered into smoother waters. Nevertheless, he would, with the Führer's approval, arrange for the newspaper article which he had already shown M. Burckhardt to be published, but the Danzig press would then be instructed to let the Danzig question be, and the exchange of notes was also to be curtailed. That was why it was desired to bring in the High Commissioner more than hitherto, as, for instance, at present in the question of Polish military transports. The Führer had told the

<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> See document No. 681.

Gauleiter that he himself was not to have any conversations with Chodacki. On the other hand, President Greiser was, as heretofore, to conduct conversations with Minister Chodacki which might serve to bring about a further *détente* in the situation.<sup>3</sup>

M. Burckhardt added some general remarks on the political situation and said how right it was to postpone the Danzig question for the time being. Danzig might yet play a great part in East European politics. A long common frontier between Russia and Poland would not work out favourably for Germany, etc., etc.

Professor Burckhardt will receive M. Chodacki at 12 noon today for a conversation, without expecting to be able to settle straight away at this first conversation that it would be better if the Poles did not route any more military transports through Danzig territory. He intends, however, to let me know the outcome of this conversation tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

DR. BÖTTCHER

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<sup>3</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Nos. 353, 363 and 375.

## No. 694

141/127239

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 377 of July 21

PARIS, July 21, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 21—5:30 p.m.

The Belgian Ambassador here, Le Tellier, after a luncheon in his house, told me about President Lebrun's visit to the Liège Exhibition,<sup>2</sup> at which he himself had been present. Outwardly the visit had gone off successfully and in a congenial atmosphere. The reception by the Belgians had been markedly courteous, even cordial. The King of the Belgians had nevertheless taken the opportunity to explain to the President of the Republic most clearly the Belgian line in foreign policy. In so doing the King had stressed the absolute necessity for the strict independence, towards all sides, of Belgian foreign policy and had explained that no event, in whatever circumstances, would cause Belgium to deviate from this policy of independence, which alone secured her existence. Belgium wished, for her part, to contribute to the preservation of European peace, but could only do so by watching scrupulously over her independence on all sides. As to the European situation, the King had told the President that he did not regard the problems involved as so difficult and intractable that they must lead

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<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> On July 19.

to war. He was optimistic and believed that the problems at issue would be solved without a conflict. Le Tellier added, of his own accord, that, as former Head of the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry in Brussels, he had had a share in inaugurating the policy of independence and could confirm to me that the King's words were meant to be taken seriously and that they corresponded with the views of every serious politician in Belgium.

WELCZECK

No. 695

1625/889118

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

LONDON, July 21, 1939—9:36 p.m.

No. 260 of July 21

Received July 22—1:30 p.m.

Pol. II 2641.

With reference to my telegram No. 252 of July 17.<sup>1</sup>

In order to break the deadlock reached in the Pact negotiations with Moscow, France has proposed to the British Government that the Soviet demands should be met to the extent of dropping the French and British objections to the simultaneous conclusion of a political treaty and a military convention.<sup>2</sup> The French Government have overcome the initial opposition of the British Government by representing this as a point of relatively slight importance. If France and Britain stood firm on the question of indirect aggression, the Soviet Government could not, even if both pacts were concluded simultaneously, attempt, with any prospect of success, to misconstrue the whole treaty structure. Furthermore the negotiations would in any case still last some considerable time. Thereupon the British Government have today given appropriate instructions to their Ambassador in Moscow, but have at the same time pointed out that no further concessions are possible on the question of indirect aggression.<sup>3</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 679.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 357 and 358.

<sup>3</sup> See also *ibid.*, Nos. 378 and 379.

No. 696

610/248230-31

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

URGENT

BERLIN, July 21, 1939.

Consul General von Druffel telephoned the following information from Bratislava at 6:15 p.m. today:

On the strength of the report, of which you are aware, that Germany had agreed to the setting up of Slovak garrisons in the protected zone<sup>1</sup>, the Slovak Minister of War<sup>2</sup> had ordered one battalion to move into a garrison in the protected zone. The German military mission were informed of this and they at once protested. There had then arisen a disagreement over the matter between the Foreign Minister, Ďurčanský, and the Minister of War. Ďurčanský had given the Minister of War to understand that he ought simply to have created a *fait accompli*. The Minister of War had thereupon threatened to resign. The possibility of a Cabinet crisis still existed. In the meantime Ďurčanský had gone off to the Tatra, and Tuka was deputising for him. Druffel has discussed the matter with Tuka and again asked him for an undertaking that the battalion will not be despatched. It has been represented by the Slovaks that some frontier control against the Protectorate is necessary. Druffel has conceded that a mixed German-Slovak commission should enquire into the question of whether such control is necessary. This could do no harm, as the German representative on the commission could naturally only take decisions on instructions from Berlin. I told Herr von Druffel that he must make no further concession whatsoever in the matter.

As to the facts of the case, Lieutenant General Barckhausen told me today that he had also talked the matter over with Colonel General Keitel, who, however, had adopted a negative attitude. There was an earlier order from the Führer stating that no Slovak troops whatever were to be in the zone. From the purely military point of view he thought that a concession in this respect was not entirely out of the question.

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 154 of July 19 (not printed, 610/248223) Druffel had reported that the Slovak Foreign Minister had shown him a report from his Minister in Berlin, according to which both Eisenlohr and Weizsäcker had expressed themselves in favour of token Slovak garrisons in the protected zone. As this was contrary to previous instructions, Druffel asked for an explanation. See also document No. 667.

<sup>2</sup> General Ferdinand Čatloš.

## No. 697

2134/467401

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

SALZBURG, July 21, 1939.

Submitted to the State Secretary.

The Reich Foreign Minister asks you to make an appointment to have a conversation with the Belgian Ambassador<sup>1</sup> or the Belgian

<sup>1</sup> Vicomte Davignon.

Chargé d'Affaires.<sup>2</sup> He requests that on this occasion you should first speak to the Belgian representative about the Belgian press campaign now in progress, which is causing surprise in Germany. He further asks you, during your conversation, to inform the Belgian representative confidentially of the exchange of correspondence which has taken place between Foreign Minister Bonnet and the Reich Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> and to hand him informally a copy of the two documents. The Reich Foreign Minister wishes, in this way, to forestall any one-sided information reaching the Belgian Government from a French source and to communicate to them our view of the Polish question.

ERICH KORDT

<sup>2</sup> Vicomte Berryer, Counsellor of Embassy.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 602 and 669.

## No. 698

2791/547957

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 263 of July 22

LONDON, July 22, 1939.

W VI 2679.

Staatsrat Wohlthat left by air yesterday. He signed the Whaling Agreement here<sup>1</sup> and also had unofficial conversations on refugee questions; he has, moreover, spoken to Waley<sup>2</sup> about initiating the Czech negotiations (Debt Settlement).<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, he was invited by Hudson to a discussion on German-British foreign trade questions and by Sir Horace Wilson to take part in an exchange of ideas on questions of economic policy.<sup>4</sup>

Today's press, especially war-mongering correspondents like Gordon Lennox (*Daily Telegraph*) and Vernon Bartlett (*News Chronicle*), publishes fantastic and absurd reports on the alleged subject of the conversations. These reports are being corrected by other papers (for example, *The Times*).

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Wohlthat had led the German delegation at a Whaling Conference held at the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries on July 17-20.

<sup>2</sup> Sigismund Waley, Principal Assistant-Secretary at H.M. Treasury.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 672. Telegram No. 253 of July 18 from London (not printed, 8375/E591089) reported the substance of a private conversation between Wohlthat and Waley about starting these negotiations and the related questions of *de facto* British recognition of the Protectorate and the grant of an *exequatur* for the British Consul General at Prague. In report No. B 2739 of Aug. 14 (not printed, 7981/E575198-99) Th. Kordt forwarded a memorandum on British proposals to start negotiations on Sept. 4.

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 716.

## No. 699

103/111485

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 136 of July 22

Moscow, July 22, 1939—1:07 p.m.

Received July 22—1:35 p.m.

The entire Soviet press today publishes the following report, under the headline: "In the Foreign Trade Commissariat":<sup>1</sup> "During the last few days Soviet-German negotiations with regard to trade and credit have been resumed. On behalf of the Foreign Trade Commissariat the negotiations are being conducted by the Deputy Trade Representative in Berlin, Babarin, and by Schnurre for the Germans."

SCHULENBURG

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<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 399.

## No. 700

695/280374-75

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 152 of July 22

BERLIN, July 22, 1939—12:00 p.m.

Received July 23—8:45 a.m.

For the Ambassador

With reference to your telegram No. 132.<sup>1</sup>

As you had announced, Babarin called on Schnurre and stated that he was empowered to negotiate here and also to sign a treaty in Berlin. Depending upon the course the conversations take, we wish to reserve our decision on whether perhaps part of the negotiations might yet be transferred to Moscow. At all events we will here act in a markedly forthcoming manner, since a conclusion, and this at the earliest possible date, is desired for general reasons.

As far as the purely political aspect of our conversations with the Russians is concerned, we regard the period of waiting stipulated for you in our telegram No. 134<sup>2</sup> as having expired. You are therefore empowered to pick up the threads again there, without in any way pressing the matter; and for this purpose to avail yourself of, *inter alia*, conversations on current matters.

Should the Russians broach the matter of our relations with Japan,

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 677.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 588.

it is perhaps useful for you to know that only yesterday the Japanese Ambassador in Berlin again represented the shooting and clashes in Outer Mongolia<sup>3</sup> as of no importance.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> A memorandum of July 22 by Weizsäcker, St.S. No. 586 (not printed, 174/135997), records a conversation he had had with the Japanese Ambassador on a social occasion, but makes no mention of this subject. See also document No. 688.

## No. 701

141/127240-41

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 587

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.

I invited the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires to call on me today and remonstrated with him about the Belgian press, particularly in connection with the Abetz case. M. Berryer maintained and also sought to prove to me that no serious, or indeed any Government, papers had taken part in this agitation, but rather that they had been critical of it. He entirely agreed with my representations.

In accordance with the instructions of the Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> I informed the Chargé d'Affaires of the exchange of letters between Bonnet and the Foreign Minister of this month.<sup>2</sup> I read out the material parts of the documents to M. Berryer, but could not quite make out whether the Chargé d'Affaires was already acquainted with Bonnet's Note of July 1. In any case, it seemed to me that the arguments in the Foreign Minister's letter of the 13th instant were for the most part new to him. I gave M. Berryer the letters exchanged.

M. Berryer, on his side, produced a report from the *Völkischer Beobachter* of the 21st instant from Brussels (signed Adolf Heinatz), again casting doubts upon the attitude of Belgium. M. Berryer thought his Foreign Minister, Pierlot, would be greatly distressed that, in spite of his unambiguous statements in the Chamber, he should still be credited with allowing General Staff discussions to take place in one direction only.

I replied to M. Berryer that it should not cause surprise in Brussels if, in view of the present Franco-British encirclement manoeuvres, we were watching the attitude of our neighbour States very carefully. The fact was that the Netherlands had shown much more determination in rejecting all such manoeuvres than we were able to observe in Belgium.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 697.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 602 and 669.



## No. 702

7693/E548454-55

*The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 1283

DANZIG, July 22, 1939.

Received July 23.

Pol. V 6915.

Subject: Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig.

With reference to my report No. 977 of June 12, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honour to enclose the translation of a Note from the Polish Diplomatic Representation here to the Senate of the Free City of Danzig, dated July 19, 1939,<sup>2</sup> in which the question of the activities of the Polish Customs inspectors is again raised.

The Polish Note first sets out the difficulties which are said to be met with by various Polish Customs inspectors in carrying out their duties, and which according to the Polish view, infringe Polish rights under the Danzig-Polish Treaties. A list of cases is then enumerated, in which Polish Customs Inspectors are said to have been annoyed by the insulting behaviour of Danzig Customs officials and which was likely to incite the public.

The Polish Note demands an unequivocal statement from the Senate of the Free City of Danzig as to whether it is prepared to guarantee conditions for the Polish Customs Inspectors to carry out their duties as laid down by treaty in the territory of the Free City of Danzig, and concludes by giving notice of economic counter measures by the Polish Government, under which, with effect from August 1, 1939, the control exercised by the Polish Customs officials at the Danzig firm "Amada-Unida" would cease, and the processing trade certificates issued by the Danzig Customs House for the consignments of fats from this firm to Poland would no longer be recognized.

As the Danish Consul General<sup>3</sup> who manages the margarine factory "Amada-Unida" informs me, the whole of the share capital of the factory is in Dutch hands. The Netherlands Consul General<sup>4</sup> will be dealing with the matter as well as his British colleague<sup>5</sup> as part of the management of the firm is in England.

The Senate has not yet decided on the reply to be made to the Polish Diplomatic Representation. I beg to reserve a further report on this.

JANSON

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 515.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7693/E548456-61); in addition to the points summarized in the document here printed, the Note complained that no reply had been made to two previous Notes of June 6 [no copy has been found] and June 10 [not printed, 7693/E548435-40] in reply to the Danzig Note of June 3 [document No. 471].

<sup>3</sup> H. G. Schrader.

<sup>4</sup> Jonkheer H. G. van der Maesen de Sombreff.

<sup>5</sup> F. M. Shepherd.

## No. 703

5570/E398957-62

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.

## DELIVERIES OF WAR MATERIAL

Decisions will probably have to be taken in the near future on principles of policy for dealing further with deliveries of war material to a number of politically important countries.

According to the enclosed copy of today's letter from the High Command of the Wehrmacht, the Führer has made a number of new decisions about deliveries of war material in general and for South East Europe and Italy in particular.

A short review is given below of the state of deliveries of war material to the most important countries, made in accordance with the above-mentioned decisions by the Führer.

*I. Bulgaria*

The King of Bulgaria and the Bulgarian Government have requested that the following most important requirements be met, in order to accelerate Bulgarian rearmament:<sup>1</sup>

a) Immediate provision of two small submarines of 250 tons each. This concerns an especially urgent request from the King who asked that it be submitted to the Führer.

b) Immediate provision of 2,000 light machine guns.

c) Advancing the delivery dates for the field artillery to be supplied in the spring and summer of 1940.

d) Immediate provision of 30 to 40 light tanks from Czech stocks.

e) Speeding up further war material deliveries of various kinds from Czech stocks.

f) Early delivery of 10 modern German bombers and 10 modern German fighters.

A decision on principle must be taken about point a) (submarines). All other requirements can probably be met or, as in the case of point c) (advancing the delivery dates), it should be possible in the course of the discussions now in progress between the Foreign Ministry and the Bulgarian Minister and General Russev to reach an amicable settlement with the Bulgarians to the effect that they postpone these requests.

*II. Yugoslavia*

The Protocol on the general terms of a credit [*Rahmenkredit*] for deliveries of war material was signed at Belgrade on July 5.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 656.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 620.

Yugoslav Government are now pressing for the total amount of this credit to be determined and for a specification of what material can be obtained by Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> During the last few days Field Marshal Göring has withdrawn the consent he had previously given for the supply of modern aircraft to Yugoslavia.<sup>4</sup> Since, however, the credit agreement has been concluded, and negotiations have already been in progress for months on the material to be delivered if a credit agreement were concluded, it will not be possible to refuse these deliveries now without greatly annoying Yugoslavia.

A further difficulty lies in the fact that, according to the above-mentioned decision by the Führer, a large part of the Skoda deliveries destined for Yugoslavia are not now to be made.

### III. Italy

Since the end of May, the Italian Government have been asking for delivery of about 50 anti-aircraft batteries to the total value of approximately 40 million RM.<sup>5</sup> As the Italian Government attach particular importance to 8.8 cm. anti-aircraft guns, it is doubtful whether they will accept the 7.5 cm. anti-aircraft guns of Skoda now offered them in accordance with the Führer's decision. Should this not be the case, the question would have to be examined as to whether for political reasons it might be necessary to make available to Italy at least limited numbers of 8.8 cm. anti-aircraft guns. Field Marshal Göring has hitherto opposed delivery of German-made guns because of the difficult position as regards production and raw materials.

### IV. Rumania

It will not be possible to carry out the agreement on aircraft material deliveries to the value of about 60 million RM which, as a result of Herr Clodius' negotiations, was concluded at Bucharest on July 8,<sup>6</sup> subject to the approval of the Reich Air Ministry, if, by the Führer's above-mentioned decision, the latest types of aircraft are to be excluded.

The performance of this agreement is however urgently desirable since we are to receive in return petroleum to the full value (that is approximately 800,000 tons). Of these supplies 400,000 tons can already be obtained by January 1940. It will depend *inter alia* on the receipt of these supplies whether petrol rationing will have to be introduced in Germany. Furthermore, the Rumanians would lose all confidence in German methods of negotiation if we were suddenly to declare that we did not now intend to carry out an agreement that had been under negotiation for months.

<sup>3</sup> Heeren forwarded a copy of a Yugoslav Note to this effect under report No. 5 from Bled of July 18 (not printed, 5570/E398954-55).

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 573.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 660 and D.D.I., Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 610.

<sup>6</sup> See documents Nos. 632 and 639.

The second order by the Führer which concerns Rumania, that other war material is not to be delivered before the winter of 1940, can probably be carried out without any special difficulties, if attention is drawn to the customary long delivery dates. Justifying such long delivery dates will be difficult only in the case of light weapons and above all anti-tank guns.

#### V. *Turkey*

The question of war material deliveries to Turkey will have to be considered in relation to the general economic policy we intend to adopt towards Turkey. A special memorandum on this will be submitted on July 25, after consultation with the interested Ministries.<sup>7</sup>

To be submitted to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

The attached letter from the High Command of the Wehrmacht, concerning instructions issued by the Führer to the High Command of the Wehrmacht on the military aspect of the export of war material, has been transmitted to the Foreign Ministry at my request made in yesterday's conversation with the Head of the War Economy Staff.<sup>8</sup> After learning that the Führer had issued instructions to military departments, I asked for this letter in order to ensure that due and timely consideration is given to points of foreign policy when final decisions are taken.

As Minister of Economics Funk is away on leave until August 5, the proposed discussion with the Führer will probably not be held until after this date. Field Marshal Göring has also reserved for ten to twelve days his final decision on questions with his province.

However, at the Foreign Ministry's urgent request<sup>9</sup> the OKW has promised a final communication by July 26 about the date on which the 2,000 machine guns can be delivered to Bulgaria.<sup>10</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (96/107918-23); this was drawn up by Wiehl on July 28. Its main points are reproduced in document No. 782.

<sup>8</sup> General of Infantry Georg Thomas.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 659.

<sup>10</sup> Marginal notes: "What is the position on the delivery of the two submarines to Bulgaria? W[iehl] 8 [August]". "Delivery has been refused. K[alisch] 14/8."

[Enclosure]

High Command of the Wehrmacht  
No. 66 f 20/aW Stb W Wi VII/39g

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.  
Received July 22.

Subject: Export permits and embargoes.

I. On July 11, 1939, the Führer conveyed through his Adjutant that he did not approve of arms deliveries to hostile countries or to States whose attitude in time of war was doubtful. Arms are to be supplied to countries where they can be of benefit to us or at least do us no

harm, e.g. South America, the Baltic States, Norway, Bulgaria. The Führer intends to discuss this with Minister Funk.

II. On the basis of this statement by the Führer, Colonel General Keitel submitted the details of the Treaty with Rumania and was given the following decisions on this occasion:

1) The Führer agrees to the agreement on aircraft material being carried out provided the latest types of aircraft are not supplied.

2) Deliveries of war material under the general credit agreement, and from the Protectorate, are not to be made until later, and not before the winter of 1940-1941.

III. The Führer has forbidden delivery to Turkey of the submarine constructed at the Germania shipyard and has also again refused permission for the export to Turkey of the 24 cm. howitzers in store at the Skoda works. He gave as the reason that political relations between Turkey and Germany must first be fully clarified before there could be any question of delivering such high-grade war material.

IV. The Führer agrees to the supply from Army stocks of the equipment urgently requested by Bulgaria. It concerns:

2,000 light machine guns (Steyr model) 8 mm.,

30 million 8 mm. cartridges,

26 light armoured cars (Czech make).

V. In the case of Yugoslavia the Führer has decided that:

1) the requirements of the German Army have priority and therefore the 200 3.7 cm. anti-tank guns from Skoda are not for the present to be released for Yugoslavia (deliveries not before Spring 1940),

2) the 7.5 cm. anti-aircraft guns, which will be ready at the Skoda works during the next few months, are first to be offered to Italy. Only if the negotiations with Italy are unsuccessful will they be available for Yugoslavia. The guns in question have meanwhile been offered to the Italians by the Air Ministry through the Italian Military Attaché.<sup>11</sup>

The Chief of the High Command  
of the Wehrmacht  
by order: BECKER

<sup>11</sup> Maj.-Gen. Marras.

## No. 704

2208/474301

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.

DELIVERIES OF MACHINE TOOLS TO RUSSIA AND JAPAN

The Japanese Counsellor of Embassy, on July 19, 1939,<sup>1</sup> raised with

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 688.

Under State Secretary Woermann the subject of Russo-German economic discussions and made the following observations on this:

"Economic conversations were of course also taking place at present between Germany and Japan. Japan was exceptionally well able to take German machinery. Our negotiators had declared that the German capacity was limited and that in consequence of home requirements certain machinery could not be delivered. It would thus make an extremely painful impression in Japan if the machinery which was being denied to Japan were now to go to the Soviet Union."

At the negotiations we held out a promise to the Russians for deliveries of machine tools to the total value of 167 million RM during the next two years. In return we shall receive to the full amount high-grade products, which to us represent foreign exchange.

At the negotiations we offered the Japanese deliveries of machine tools to an approximate value of 60 million RM during the next two years. The Japanese supplies in return consist only partly of products which to us represent foreign exchange.

Submitted herewith to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister for information, with reference to the memoranda of June 15, 1939, (W IV 2242),<sup>2</sup> and July 5, 1939,<sup>3</sup> on the negotiations with the Russians.

WIEHL

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 530.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2092/452633-35). This memorandum summarized the current state of the German-Soviet economic negotiations and the views of both sides.

## No. 705

97/108436-37

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division I*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.

Pol. I M 3134 g.

Concerning the naval visit to Danzig,<sup>1</sup> Captain Ambrosius of the High Command of the Navy communicated to me the result of several telephone conversations between the OKM and the Berghof as follows:

1) The Führer has still reserved his decision on the date of the visit. It must be expected that an order will be given at short notice for the visit to take place after July 29/30.

2) The Führer has decided that in any case the two battleships will not take part in the visit. The commander of the reconnoitring forces would therefore be in command of the whole visit. The cruiser *Nürnberg* would take the place of the cruiser *Leipzig*.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 687.

3) The Office of the Wehrmacht Adjutants has been requested to obtain a decision from the Führer on two points as follows:

(a) When, how, and on what scale an announcement on the visit is to be made.

(b) The question as to whether arrangements with the Danzig authorities on visits and invitations are to be made in accordance with the prescribed protocol.

The High Command of the Navy would be grateful if the Foreign Ministry would also raise these two questions of its own accord, should the Foreign Minister intend once again to report to the Führer on the political aspect of the visit.

In reply to my question, Captain Ambrosius stated that the High Command of the Navy had no intention of again approaching the Führer of its own accord about the date of the visit. The fleet is about to sail for its projected manoeuvres in the Baltic.

NOSTITZ

## No. 706

2196/473609-13

### *Memorandum by Ambassador Ritter*

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.

#### RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION ON JULY 21 BETWEEN RITTER AND THE HUNGARIAN MINISTER ABOUT THE HUNGARIAN MEMORANDUM<sup>1</sup>

I began by referring to the conversation between the Hungarian Minister<sup>2</sup> and Under State Secretary Woermann on July 10,<sup>3</sup> and confirmed that the Reich Government were prepared to follow up the Hungarian suggestion for negotiations on war economy. Under State Secretary Woermann had, at that time, already pointed out that on the German side such negotiations would be conducted by the Foreign Ministry. In the meantime I had been instructed to conduct these negotiations—or as the Hungarian Memorandum put it, “discussions temporarily of a non-binding character”—with authorized Hungarian officials.

I said I should like to take this opportunity of making a general observation on the Hungarian Memorandum as regards substance and some remarks as regards procedure. The Hungarian Memorandum distinguished between four possibilities, a, b, c, d, for the negotiations on war economy, and apparently proceeded from the view that any agreements on war economy could, or should, be different for each of these possibilities. We could not share this view. Such distinctions, when

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 578, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Döme Sztójay.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 641, footnote 2.

applied to the subject of war economy, seemed to us to be rather too much on General Staff lines. A General Staff officer must indeed make such distinctions in his purely military planning. But for the proposed negotiations on war economy, we must start from the plain and self-evident principle that Hungary with her whole economic potential would in *every case* stand by Germany (and, in given circumstances, to a proportionate extent by Italy), just as the reverse would be the case.

As regards procedure I spoke as follows:

1) As Under State Secretary Woermann had already said, on the German side the negotiations would be conducted by the Foreign Ministry. The Hungarian Minister here remarked that, in that case, there would probably also have to be a change in the original Hungarian intention of having the war economy negotiations conducted by military representatives. I answered that a decision upon this point naturally rested with the Hungarian Government. I personally did not consider such a change to be absolutely necessary. Nor would I conduct the negotiations by myself, but would have one or more German military representatives to assist me. On the Hungarian side, too, this or that representative of the non-military Ministries would presumably have to take part. It therefore seemed to me perfectly possible that in Hungary the negotiations would be conducted by military representatives.

2) The Hungarian Memorandum mentioned tripartite negotiations (Germany, Hungary, Italy) and even the convening of a "Tripartite Military Conference". Now it was, of course, very probable that the proposed negotiations would, at some later date, lead to tripartite discussions. But it did not seem to us expedient to have tripartite negotiations from the beginning. Experience had shown that technically the better method of negotiating was to discuss problems in the first place bilaterally. As mentioned in the Hungarian Memorandum, Hungary had indeed already held such bilateral discussions with Italy previously. (At this point, I mentioned incidentally that we had intimated in general terms to the Italian Ambassador here that Hungary had approached us with such a suggestion.) At the suitable moment, the German and Hungarian negotiators would decide when, and in what form, Italy was to be informed and invited to participate.

3) As to the time, I pointed out that provision had been made in the published German-Italian Pact of Friendship and Alliance of May 22<sup>4</sup> for the setting up of German-Italian Commissions for such purposes. These German-Italian Commissions were in process of being set up. It was not yet settled when they would begin their work. Probably this would be in August. We would like first to begin with this German-Italian work and then take up parallel negotiations with Hungary.

From a remark by the Hungarian Minister it appeared that he had in

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 426.



mind also negotiations on purely military material such as arms, aircraft, etc. I answered that by negotiations on "war economy" we rather understood negotiations on the provision of food and the supply of raw materials, also including such as were of military importance, and questions of communications. It would be necessary clearly to define the subjects of these negotiations from the outset.

In conclusion I offered to go to Budapest for a day or two in order to have preliminary informal first talks with the authorized person on the Hungarian side on details of the method of procedure, the time and the subjects of the negotiations. Thus preparations could be made for the negotiations in the simplest way and in a practical manner. I would be available for this purpose on Wednesday and Thursday, July 26 and 27, or about August 4-8.<sup>5</sup>

I said in the course of the discussion, which was in part conducted as a personal conversation, that apart from the distinction between the four possibilities, a, b, c, d, other passages in the Hungarian Memorandum also seemed to derive from ideas which could not find full approval in Berlin.<sup>6</sup>

RITTER

<sup>5</sup> In a memorandum on a further conversation with the Hungarian Minister, on July 26 (not printed, 73/51952), Ritter noted that Sztójay had suggested that, since the Hungarian Government's communication of July 24 [document No. 712] had considerably broadened the basis of the proposed discussions, it would be as well not to fix a date for them for the time being.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "To be submitted to Under State Secretary Woermann and to the State Secretary. R[itter] 22/7." Initialled "W[oermann] 26/7".

## No. 707

419/216201

### *Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

BERLIN, July 22, 1939.

Sent July 23—2:00 p.m.

zu Kult. Spez.<sup>2</sup> 382.<sup>3</sup>

With reference to my despatch Kult. Spez. No. 233 of June 30.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The distribution list has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> The explanation of this reference appears in a memorandum by Altenburg dated June 1, 1939 (not printed, 419/216248-49), the first two paragraphs of which read as follows: "The Foreign Minister has stated that: 1. The Führer has decided that the Foreign Minister shall be in charge of all foreign propaganda and that in putting out such propaganda the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda shall merely be concerned with the technical side. 2. The work must be started at once and must be conducted, not under the reference of 'Pol. Spez.', but under that of 'Kult.'"

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> This communication from Weizsäcker to Heads of Missions or their deputies, marked "Top Secret" (2130/465903) reads as follows: "As from July 1, the Mission will experimentally be supplied daily, as quickly as possible, with a summary of the more important press views and reports, in both German and the national language (when this last is not possible, in English or French). It is requested that this material be used in conversations or in any other suitable manner. Please report on the usefulness of these summaries and if necessary make suggestions in about a month's time."

Evidence of Missions' propaganda activity is so far inadequate. The Foreign Minister expects the most vigorous activity and submission of detailed reports on the use made of the material transmitted and on the effects of appropriate propaganda put out on their own initiative. If necessary, suggestions and requests for more material are to be made.

Aims of propaganda: Refutation of foreign propaganda, convincing representation of the German position on the Danzig and Corridor questions, all under the aspect of complete abolition of the Versailles dictate, with emphasis on the peaceful trend of the Reich's foreign policy. To this end, fullest use should be made of the Führer's speeches, especially that of April 28.<sup>5</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 355.

## No. 708

259/169685

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 264 of July 24

LONDON, July 24, 1939—8:02 p.m.

Received July 24—9:40 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 263 of July 22.<sup>1</sup>

After the influential *Sunday Times*, obviously officially inspired, had drawn attention to the rejection<sup>2</sup> of the plan said to have been submitted to Staatsrat Wohlthat, this morning's papers, except *The Times*, are giving great ... (group missing) to Hudson's alleged statements on his conversations with Wohlthat.

Information so far available about Hudson's actions leads to the conclusion that the opponents of any understanding with Germany saw a chance of nipping in the bud any constructive policy which might develop, by spreading fantastic ideas which, if taken at their face value, could only arouse indignation in Germany. Hudson, in his almost morbid desire for self-assertion, then, in his loquacity, provided an opportunity for warmongering correspondents and their henchmen (certain personages at the Foreign Office, Winston Churchill and his son Randolph) to put out tendentious reports.<sup>3</sup> The text of Hudson's

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 698.

<sup>2</sup> In the original this word reads: "Abtransport [removal]" and has been amended by hand to read "Ablehnung [rejection]".

<sup>3</sup> Reports in the British press of July 22-23 that the British Government had proposed a loan to Germany (£1,000,000,000 was mentioned) as the basis of an ultimate settlement between the two countries, were the subject of a statement in the House of Commons on July 24, when the Prime Minister denied that there was any proposal for a loan to Germany, and stated that in his conversation with Dr. Wohlthat, Mr. Hudson had merely been expressing his own personal views. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 350, cols. 1025-1028.

alleged statements as well as press comments have been reported by DNB.

DIRKSEN <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> A memorandum of July 24 by Dirksen on telephone conversations with Sir Horace Wilson and Sir Orme Sargent (of the Foreign Office) on press statements attributed to Mr. Hudson, and a political review of the press of July 10-24 by Dr. Hesse, Press Adviser to the London Embassy, are printed as Nos. 15-16 in *Documents and Materials relating to the Eve of the Second World War*, vol. 2, *Dirksen Papers, 1938-39* (Moscow, 1948) (hereinafter cited as *Dirksen Papers, Moscow*). No copies of these documents have been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 426.

## No. 709

B21/B005065-67

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 240 of July 24

WASHINGTON, July 24, 1939—10:12 p.m.

Received July 25—8:00 a.m.

With reference to your instructions Kult. Spez. No. 233 of June 30,<sup>1</sup> and to your telegram No. 195 (Kult. Spez. No. 382) of July 22.<sup>2</sup>

The summaries of press comments, reaching the Embassy regularly since the beginning of this month, are useful as sources of information and for conducting conversations. As such they are already being used in suitable ways in talks with American journalists. On the other hand, because of the well-known hostile and suspicious attitude of the American press, it is only possible to a very restricted extent to secure acceptance by American papers of the material sent to us. In addition, the American press has at its disposal, with A.P., U.P., and countless special correspondents, an excellent telegraphic news service, so that, for this reason alone, the possibilities of using the above mentioned summaries suffer considerably, apart from the fact that, as they are not telegraphed, they arrive very late in America. The Embassy will, nevertheless, endeavour to get the material sent printed, as occasion arises. In cooperation with the [German] Library of Information in New York, the German language newspapers are supplied with German and English transcripts of the material.

As far as propaganda activities in general are concerned, the Embassy has, during the last two years, constantly striven to make known the true facts through contacts with leading American journalists in Washington, by disseminating translations of the Führer's speeches and those of other leading personalities of Party and State as well as by refuting hostile foreign propaganda by sending corrections to the news agencies

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 707, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 707, which was sent to Washington as telegram No. 195.

here. In this connection, the dissemination of the Führer's speech of April 28 should be specially noted, 200,000 copies having been distributed in translation to all circles of the American people. It is established, from numerous letters and press comments, that this action has had the desired success. In the same way I have today translated the decision of the Argentine Court of Appeal in the Patagonia affair,<sup>3</sup> which has just reached us from Buenos Aires, and have had it sent to my journalist acquaintances and other interested persons.

In view of the fundamentally negative attitude towards all Germans the possibilities of intensifying propaganda in America are slender, and would only be available on the expenditure of considerable funds.

1) One suitable method seems to me to lie in an expansion of Transocean<sup>4</sup> (cf. report No. 1213 of July 6).<sup>5</sup> With the speed of news transmission today, it is essential that we make an attempt through a German agency also to publicize our point of view here as quickly as possible. It would also be desirable for the articles from the *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz* to be transmitted more frequently by Transocean, as, in consequence of the rapid changes in the political situation, they often, after only a few days, lose in topicality and therefore in effect.

2) I see a further possibility in the expansion of the Library of Information, which with its present inadequate staff and slender means can achieve no really valuable results. I suggest that the Library of Information be detached from the Consulate General in New York and be technically subordinated to the Embassy, while outwardly appearing as an independent undertaking. A leading German editor who possesses a thorough knowledge of Britain and America, and who disposes of a clever pen and great psychological insight, should be called upon to take charge. Such a person should be given the task of bringing out an information service, written in English and suited to the American mentality, in which current political problems would be treated from the German point of view in an easily understandable way, and circulated in large numbers among circles of the American people.

THOMSEN

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to the publication in certain Argentine newspapers on Mar. 31 and Apr. 1, 1939, of what was alleged to be a facsimile of a report, dated Jan. 11, 1937, from the German Embassy in Buenos Aires to the Colonial Policy Office in Munich, bearing the signatures of Counselor Schubert, of the Embassy, and Alfred Müller, Deputy Landesgruppenleiter of the NSDAP in the Argentine. The report dealt with the collection of secret material for the purpose of a German annexation of Patagonia. This publication and the ensuing detention of Müller led to protests by the German Government, who stated that their investigations had revealed the document to be a forgery. Following an investigation by the Argentine Public Prosecutor, Müller, who had appealed for a final decision, obtained a Court decision in his favour on June 27, 1939. Extensive material dealing with this matter has been filmed on Serial 233.

<sup>4</sup> A German news agency, originally covering South America and the Far East, but subsequently extended to include North America also.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

## No. 710

2399/500437-40

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*SECRET  
A 2974LONDON, July 24, 1939.  
Pol. II 2678.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Decision of the British Government to pursue a constructive policy.

Now that the excitement over the Danzig week-end crisis has subsided, the general atmosphere has calmed down, thus enabling the leading personalities to concentrate their thoughts on the decisive question, namely, whether the German-British tension is driving to war, or whether a settlement can be reached by peaceful means. Politicians, both responsible and irresponsible, bellicose and sober, are agreed that the state of extreme tension which has now lasted so many months cannot go on. While, however, the press and the majority of politicians are confining themselves to fatalism or to bellicose utterances, the few really decisive statesmen in Britain have considered and put into more concrete form the lines of thought mentioned in my report of June 24, 1939,<sup>1</sup> on a constructive policy towards Germany. The trends in foreign and domestic policy described in this report—tension with Japan, stagnation in the negotiations for a pact with Russia, doubts as to the value of the Polish ally, considerations of election tactics—have in the meantime had further effect and have strengthened the constructive trends.

General considerations as to how a settlement with Germany could be achieved by peaceful means seem to have crystallized into a number of concrete points, which it is desired to discuss as a whole and simultaneously. Based on a policy of political appeasement, which is to secure the principle of non-aggression and the limitation of spheres of political interest by a comprehensive formula, a comprehensive economic programme is in the process of being worked out, to include the following questions: colonies, raw materials, spheres of economic interest, agreements over cooperation in other markets. Naturally, as being the point of greatest interest to the British, the limitation of armaments has been included in the programme. On these plans, entertained by leading circles, Staatsrat Wohlthat, who during his stay in London last week has had detailed conversations on them on British initiative, will be able to give more exact information.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 564.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 716.

The question which causes the sponsors of these ideas the greatest headaches is how to start these talks. Public opinion is so roused and the warmongers and intriguers have gained such an ascendancy, that publication of such plans for negotiations with Germany would immediately be torpedoed by Churchill and other agitators with cries of "No second Munich!" or "No return to the policy of appeasement!" How active and dangerous this group is, has been shown by the publication of the fact that confidential talks between Wohlthat and Sir Horace Wilson and between Wohlthat and Mr. Hudson, the Secretary for Overseas Trade, have taken place;<sup>3</sup> more poison was spread by the printing of a quite fantastic and mendacious account of the programme of the negotiations. The fact that the *Daily Telegraph* and *News Chronicle* are leading this campaign of incitement clearly shows who are the men behind it.

Those concerned with working out a list of points for negotiation therefore realize that the preparatory steps in respect of Germany must be taken in the greatest secrecy. Only if Germany's willingness to negotiate is established and agreement is reached, at least on the programme, perhaps on some general principles, would the British Government feel strong enough to acquaint the public of their intentions and the steps so far taken. If, however, the Government could in this way open up the prospect of a German-British settlement, they feel certain that the public would hail such an announcement with the greatest joy and that then all the mischief-makers would be reduced to silence.

So much is, indeed, expected from the realization of such a plan, that it is even considered an effective election slogan, which would bring victory to the Government parties in the autumn and thus enable them to remain in power for another five years. However, the Whips are more than ever convinced that the election could just as surely be won on the opposite slogan of "Preparedness for the Coming War", should there be no prospect of a settlement with Germany.

This conviction means, at the same time, that the decision in principle on starting negotiations with Germany, and the achievement of agreement in principle, are subject to a certain time limit. For, since the elections are presumably to be held in November, and the organization of the preparations for them takes some six weeks, the British would have to try and get matters straightened out with Germany by the end of September at the latest. As to the time factor, there is a certain amount of optimism in that people think that the Germans too—assuming that in principle they are willing to negotiate—would desire a certain speeding up, in view of the Party Rally at Nuremberg.

In conclusion I should like to point out that, in these trends towards coming to a settlement with Germany, the German-Polish problem

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 708.

has also found a place, in so far as it is thought that, in the event of a German-British settlement being reached, the Polish problem would also be easier to solve, as a calmer atmosphere would help negotiations and there would be less British interest in Poland.

The plans of leading British statesmen as described above may appear Utopian, given the unbridled language used by the British press and politicians, and in view of the fact that the encirclement policy is being continued, albeit not with the same enthusiasm. But such plans gain in probability if one considers the limited influence of the British sensational press and, moreover, bears in mind that, for Great Britain, agreement with Germany is still the most worthwhile aim—as opposed to the alternative of a war, which would be undertaken only with great reluctance, but which, however, failing agreement with Germany, is considered inevitable.

DIRKSEN

No. 711

FI/0264-65

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

TOP SECRET

Ambassador Attolico informed me—in strict confidence—of certain basic principles which the Duce will put forward when he meets the Führer on August 4.<sup>1</sup> (I note that Attolico has no written instructions but that he received the following as oral instructions through Count Magistrati.)

1) Italy will stand at our side at any time, if the Führer considers war inevitable.

2) The Duce does not believe in the possibility of a localized German-Polish war, but would then expect a general European conflagration.

3) If we must fight, then we—not the others—should choose the right moment.

4) Should the conversation at the Brenner lead to a peaceful policy for the time being, then it should result in something more constructive. It would not be sufficient merely to establish political agreement.

5) If we may still count on a period of peace over several years, some constructive work will have to be done in the interval perhaps by holding talks with the other Powers—Germany with Poland, Italy with France, or also generally amongst the greater Powers—whereby we must secure to ourselves the benefit of taking the initiative.

6) Both the taking of such an initiative or a possible rejection of it would work out to our advantage.

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 646 and 718.

I assume that Ambassador Attolico, should talks with the Western Powers actually be adumbrated, will at least indicate their procedure, scope, programme and aims.

Herewith to the Foreign Minister.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Weizsäcker's handwriting: "By plane to Fuschl on 25/7."

## No. 712

73/51940-45

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

St.S. No. 589

The Hungarian Minister, whose visit was announced by telegram by Herr von Erdmannsdorff (telegram No. 217)<sup>1</sup> has just called on me. He handed me the original letters from the Hungarian Minister President to the Führer which are attached. The Minister said that the letters were based on a resolution passed by the Hungarian Government. He had been charged to deliver the letters direct to the Führer. He (Sztójay) would be in Bayreuth on Thursday and Friday of this week<sup>2</sup> and would therefore be in a position to present the letters if the Führer were receiving visitors then. Otherwise he would wish to have the letters transmitted to the Führer by the Foreign Minister. Presentation of the letters to the Duce would probably take place today in Rome.<sup>3</sup>

As to the presentation, I arranged with the Hungarian Minister that he should hand the original letters for the Führer to me. I would then transmit them to the Foreign Minister so that he might deliver them to their destination.

After I had read the copies of the two letters, which Sztójay also gave me, in his presence, I spoke to him as follows: As these were letters from the Head of the Hungarian Government to the Führer, it was not for me to express any opinion on them. For my own information, however, I would like to put some questions to the Minister:

(a) Whether the closer cooperation with the German-Italian Committee, requested in the first letter, referred to war economy or to other spheres as well (the Hungarian Government know about our Commissions from Article IV of the German-Italian Pact of Alliance);<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Of July 22. Not printed (73/51937-38).

<sup>2</sup> The Bayreuth Festival opened on July 25 with a gala performance which Hitler attended.

<sup>3</sup> See *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 663 and 664, for the letters addressed to Mussolini. See also *ibid.*, No. 660.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 426.



(b) what was to be understood by "the present circumstances" in the second letter; and

(c) how the two letters could be reconciled.

To all these three questions M. Sztójay had no answer. He had no instructions. I closed the conversation by saying that I would, as mentioned above, pass on the two letters, the second of which I described as being of a serious nature.

I conducted the conversation quite drily and very curtly, so as not to convey to the Minister the impression that I saw nothing unusual in these Hungarian communications. Other than this, I reserved the position on everything.

It should be added that German-Hungarian cooperation in war economy which had already been envisaged some time ago and which we had thought of as, at first, on a bilateral basis, has already started inasmuch as Ambassador Ritter, during the past week, proposed a preliminary conversation between himself and the competent authorities in Budapest.<sup>5</sup> In the prevailing circumstances it seems to me opportune to postpone this conversation, especially as M. Sztójay today also spoke of a possible postponement.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister, for information<sup>6</sup> and submission of the letters to the Führer.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 706.

<sup>6</sup> Under cover of despatch Pol. IV 840 g. Rs. of July 26 (2130/465973-77) copies of this document and its enclosures were sent to the Missions at Rome, Warsaw and Budapest.

[Enclosure 1]

*Copy*

BUDAPEST, July 24, 1939.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: The situation in Europe is still serious. The provident nations are beginning to gather together their material and moral resources in order to protect themselves from all eventualities and surprises.

Guided by a profound confidence in the moral and material strength of the Berlin-Rome Axis, I have the honour to declare, in the name of the Royal Hungarian Government, that in the event of a general conflict Hungary will make her policy conform to the policy of the Axis; this we have also previously proved to be our endeavour. Nor can there be any doubt that alignment with this policy can in no way prejudice our national sovereignty, embodied in our constitution, or set obstacles to the accomplishment of our national aspirations.

In order to be able to put this adjustment into practice, it seems to me necessary that the mixed German-Italian Committee should, as soon as possible, form within itself an organ for the purpose of discussing tripartitely all problems which might arise from a possible very close collaboration between the three Powers.

I have the honour to make known to Your Excellency that I have addressed an identical letter to the Head of the Italian Government.

Awaiting your kind reply, I beg Your Excellency to accept the assurance of my highest esteem.

PÁL, COUNT TELEKI  
Minister President of the  
Royal Hungarian Government.

[Enclosure 2]

*Copy*

BUDAPEST, July 24, 1939.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: In order to prevent any possible misinterpretation of my letter of July 24, I have the honour to repeat also to Your Excellency that—in so far as present circumstances undergo no serious change—Hungary could not, on moral grounds, be in a position to take armed action against Poland.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurance of my highest esteem.

PÁL, COUNT TELEKI  
Minister President of the  
Royal Hungarian Government.

### No. 713

174/135998-99

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 591

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

The Japanese Ambassador came to see me today, following on a recent conversation elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Evidently he was only trying to get into touch again, without any instructions or anything definite to discuss.

I acquainted the Ambassador with the French press reports to hand, according to which the Japanese Minister President had gone so far as to hold out the prospect of Japanese neutrality in a European conflict.<sup>2</sup> Ambassador Oshima knew nothing about this or about further

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 700, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> On July 24, Weizsäcker sent the following telegram, No. 232 (174/136004) to Tokyo, addressed to the Ambassador personally: "The Times of July 24 contains the following, as concluding paragraph of a statement by the Japanese Minister President: 'The Japanese Government had already formulated their basic policy towards the European situation, and would therefore pursue it irrespective of the outcome of the Tokyo parley.' This statement is not clear. The Foreign Minister therefore requests you personally to establish the correct interpretation of what was intended. Further please telegraph a report on the situation after Anglo-Japanese agreement is reached on the Tientsin negotiations." In telegram No. 318 of July 26 (174/136014) Ott reported: "Report in 'Jour' pure invention. The Minister President's statement was made in an impromptu interview. The passage in question was therefore variously reported. The version predominating in the Japanese language press is that the Minister President expressly stated that Japanese policy would continue unchanged on the basis of strengthening the Anti-Comintern Pact, irrespective of the outcome of the Tientsin negotiations. The accuracy of this version has been confirmed by the Minister President's Private Secretary who told me, on instructions from his chief, that the Japanese Government's readiness to conclude a military alliance continued unchanged." See also document No. 719 and D.D.I., Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 660.

developments in the Anglo-Japanese negotiations, but he said he could not believe the report. If it were correct it would amount to a complete change of Japanese policy. All the indications, *inter alia* the new Japanese landings in Central and Southern China, bore witness against this.

When I then read the Ambassador *The Times* reports of today and pointed out the somewhat obscure final paragraph in the statement by the Japanese Minister President on the Japanese attitude towards European politics, Oshima stuck to his opinion but said that any suspicion that the attitude of his Government was ambiguous must be dispelled. They must take the necessary steps; he would presently ask them for this by telegraph.

For the rest the Ambassador promised to transmit to us promptly any current information about the Anglo-Japanese negotiations, as well as information on this subject of special interest to our Government.

In this conversation I did not touch on the German-Japanese situation as I had already briefly discussed it with the Ambassador a few days ago outside the office. Oshima was at that time (cf. memorandum No. 586)<sup>1</sup> optimistic, putting his trust in the army leadership.

On July 28 I shall see Admiral Foerster, who has returned from Japan,<sup>3</sup> and will then revert to the subject.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 537.

## No. 714

2134/467464

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 593

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

The Russian Chargé d'Affaires<sup>1</sup> called on me today to sound us as to our attitude towards an invitation for two German personages to the first big agricultural exhibition in Russia.<sup>2</sup> As far as my information goes, the "Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries" wants to invite and act as host to a German scientist and a member of the Ministry of Agriculture for the opening of the exhibition and for a ten days' stay in Moscow. In reply to my enquiry about invitations to other countries, the Chargé d'Affaires said that Italy and Japan were included, and presumably other States as well.

By way of explanation the Chargé d'Affaires added that, after an interval of three to four years, this would enable a modest start to be

<sup>1</sup> Georgi Astakhov.

<sup>2</sup> The All-Union Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow, which was opened by Molotov on Aug. 1, 1939.

made again on establishing cultural relations between Russia and Germany. It could certainly do no harm if a contribution were made towards improving our relations in general by means of a number of small gestures.

I took up this last remark by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires and promised that favourable consideration would be given to his suggestion. The reply ought to be given as soon as possible as the exhibition will be opened at the beginning of August.

I recommend that this suggestion should be followed up.

To the Foreign Minister with request for instructions.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "[For] Führer." (ii) "I recommend this! R[ibbentrop]." In a memorandum, St.S. No. 599 of July 27 (not printed, 103/111494), Weizsäcker recorded that he had informed Astakhov by telephone that the invitation had been favourably received and that he would put forward two names. In a further memorandum, St.S. No. 606 of Aug. 2 (not printed, 103/111507), Weizsäcker recorded that he had given Astakhov two names and a possible third. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 704 and 719.

## No. 715

103/111489

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 594

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

Following his soundings on Germans attending the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow,<sup>1</sup> the Russian Chargé d'Affaires brought the conversation round to the Anglo-Japanese negotiations on Tientsin.<sup>2</sup> M. Astakhov commented with satisfaction on how very necessary it was for the British to shed ballast in East Asia, and gold ballast at that. Moscow would not be impressed by this British retreat.

When the conversation then turned to Russian relations with Japan, I told M. Astakhov that I could not well judge whether Japan and Russia would always get on well together. I thought, at any rate, that a *modus vivendi* might very well be possible between both peoples for a good many years to come. The Russian Chargé d'Affaires confirmed this view.

M. Astakhov then asked me about present German-Polish relations. I replied in the usual way that Danzig would fall to us. The outlook for peace might become critical if intolerable provocations forced us to march on Poland, which might, of course, happen. In this case we should make short work of Poland. We hoped, nevertheless, that a peaceful solution would be achieved through Poland seeing reason.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 714.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 719.

I gave the Russian Chargé d'Affaires an opportunity to comment on the Anglo-French negotiations in Moscow, but nothing emerged from this.

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The distribution list for this document states that it should be sent to the Foreign Minister immediately, by teleprinter via Salzburg.

## No. 716

452/223410-21

### *Memorandum by an Official on the Staff of the Four Year Plan*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

Submitted to Minister President

W XIII/68.

Field Marshal Göring, for information.

MINUTE ON CONVERSATIONS WITH SIR HORACE WILSON<sup>1</sup> ON JULY 18, 3:15 P.M. TO 4:30 P.M., AND ON JULY 21, 1:0 P.M. TO 1:30 P.M., WITH SIR JOSEPH BALL<sup>2</sup> ON JULY 20, 6:20 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M., AND WITH MR. HUDSON<sup>3</sup> ON JULY 20, 5:30 P.M. TO 6:30 P.M. (ALL CONVERSATIONS TOOK PLACE AT THE REQUEST OF THE BRITISH GENTLEMEN AND WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF AMBASSADOR VON DIRKSEN.)

We reverted to the conversation which Sir Horace, Sir Joseph Ball and I had at the Duke of Westminster's at the beginning of June.<sup>4</sup> I described to Sir Horace my impressions on my return to Berlin after a four weeks' stay in Spain. In my opinion the atmosphere between Berlin and London had considerably deteriorated. British policy was expressing in every way, also in the negotiations with Russia, the determination to unite all forces against Germany. This was having a decisive influence on the assessment of the situation in Berlin. Leading circles considered the actual British policy to be a new encirclement. By contrast the speeches of Halifax and Chamberlain indicated, in a non-committal way, readiness for discussions. The press campaign was rendering a sober examination and handling of the problems more difficult at present.

My impression was that both German-Polish and also German-British relations had deteriorated. The Poles had made statements which rendered the return of Danzig to the Reich more difficult and which, in practice, limited the possibilities of negotiations almost

<sup>1</sup> For Sir Horace Wilson's record of the conversation on July 18 see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 354.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably Major Sir George Joseph Ball, Director of the Conservative Research Department.

<sup>3</sup> For Mr. Hudson's record of the conversation on July 20 see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 370.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 651.

entirely to Customs questions only. But the possibilities of negotiations on Danzig had also been restricted by some British statements.

Although I had not read all the relevant speeches, I had, however, heard from an authoritative source that Chamberlain in his latest statement had described the status of Danzig as just.<sup>5</sup> Lord Halifax was alleged to have again put forward the theory of the balance of power as being the basis of British foreign policy. It was precisely this point which would make it still more difficult to evolve a solution of the present situation, for, as a result of the obligations which had been undertaken, British policy could no longer make free decisions in all conceivable cases.

Although it was my impression that the Führer would do nothing rash over the Danzig question, the fact nevertheless remained that the Polish Government could never have acted as they did had they not been supported by the help of the British Government and even incited by agitators. But the Danzig question must be tackled realistically. In the German view it would in no way be adequate if negotiations were only to cover the status of the Free City and its improvement.

Sir Horace appeared surprised at these statements. In his view, the speeches of Chamberlain and Lord Halifax were not to be taken in this way. He gave me the text of both speeches. The speech at the Chatham House dinner of the Royal Institute of International Affairs<sup>6</sup> had been a traditional address, more in the character of a politico-philosophical lecture. Several drafts of the speech had been prepared, which he too had read. He could no longer recollect exactly the text of the last draft. In any case that which, in the British view, should substantially be stated was something other than emphasis on the return of British policy to the theory and practice of the "balance of power".<sup>7</sup> Halifax had wanted to express readiness for cooperation and for a policy of peaceful change in the present situation, in so far as Germany desired a change and agreement could be reached in negotiations with Britain.

Sir Horace said in a very sympathetic way that he wanted to speak to me as to one who was a colleague and a friend. It was in the interests of us both that uncontrollable influences should not cause an armed clash as a result of the present powerful massing of forces—a clash which might develop far beyond its immediate cause in eastern Europe, into a new fundamental struggle between the groups led by Britain and Germany. We were both interested, on our Governments' behalf, in maintaining orderly forms of government and in not exposing present-day civilization to a crisis of the greatest magnitude in consequence of

<sup>5</sup> On July 10; see Editors' Note on p. 898.

<sup>6</sup> On June 29; for the text of this speech see the *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 6106, No. 25.

<sup>7</sup> In English in the original.

such a clash. If such a calamity were to befall, he thought that we would both wish to be able to say with a clear conscience that we had done all in our power to contribute, within our Governments, to a peaceful solution by furnishing careful information and practical advice.

Sir Horace drew attention to the fact that at Munich in September, 1938, some persons had had the impression that Britain was not prepared to fight. Because of this, it had been necessary to bring home to the public the gravity of the situation. Above all, the Opposition had put pressure on the Government, as it had been assumed that the reason for the British attitude at Munich had been that Britain's armaments were not completed. If that was supposed to have been the case then, in an emergency, today the situation was completely changed. The British Air Force and the Navy had been tremendously reinforced. Britain today was militarily prepared; one need, so to speak, only press a button in London and the whole war industry would go full steam ahead. British obligations and guarantees, too, should be understood in the sense that, since March 15, Britain had been forced to act in earnest. It had been a process of strengthening the British position ("process of firming the English position"),<sup>7</sup> which was now completed. There was no doubt that the mood and readiness of the people for a war with Germany had stiffened more than was evident from the peaceful attitude adopted by the Government.

Sir Horace had, apparently in readiness for our conversation, prepared a memorandum, which he had brought in by his secretary and which began with the words "in the assumption of".<sup>7</sup> This memorandum obviously contained an elaboration, approved by Neville Chamberlain, of the points which would have to be dealt with between the German and British Governments. On the basis of the Führer's speech of April 28,<sup>8</sup> he had drawn up these points for negotiations.

Sir Horace holds the view that the conversations must be held in secret. At present only Britain and Germany should negotiate; France and Italy should only be brought in later. Both Governments could come to an understanding to inform the friendly Powers by a definite date. Sir Horace declared that Great Britain wished to negotiate with Germany as an equal partner. The highest-ranking personages should be brought together through the negotiations. Beyond this, the German-British agreements and declarations should bring out in every way the desire to cooperate. The results of the conversations should be concerned with agreements in which the basic principles of a joint German-British policy are laid down, which will then have to be worked out by constant further cooperation in individual agreements.

As on previous occasions, Sir Horace asked me for a statement of

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 355.

points which, in the Führer's view, should be discussed by both Governments. I told him that we could only speak unofficially and suggested that we discuss his memorandum. He asked when I was coming to London again. I said that I had no commission which would take me to London in the foreseeable future. He asked me to be good enough to put the German points into a form and language clearly understandable to the British. Perhaps he was being too optimistic and the solution which he considered possible appeared to some observers to be unreal, given the present situation. He had, however, had an opportunity of observing the Führer and he thought that the Führer could, as a statesman for peace, achieve even more than he had already accomplished in the building up of Greater Germany. He believed that the Führer wished to avoid the outbreak of a world war caused by the Danzig question. If the Greater German policy in respect of territorial claims was approaching the end of its demands, the Führer could take this opportunity of finding, in conjunction with Britain, a form which would enable him to go down in history as one of the greatest statesmen and which would lead to a revolution in world opinion.

If I wished to have a specific statement from the British Government, he could promise me that I would be given a responsible opinion by the Prime Minister the same day or on the following day. It naturally depended on what was the best way for such negotiations. They took the view that the negotiations ought not to be brought to the knowledge of persons who were fundamentally hostile to an understanding. In the present situation it ought not to be a question of political manoeuvres, but of realizing one of the greatest political combinations it was possible to imagine. Certainly the British Government would not like to create the impression that they desired to negotiate in all circumstances. If no other solution was possible, Britain and the Empire were today ready for, and determined upon, an armed conflict. Given the mentality of some circles, it appeared to him of the greatest importance that there should be no false impression as to British readiness for peace or for war.

*Programme for German-British Cooperation.* (Sir Horace W.)

#### A. Political Questions

1) A joint German-British declaration that forcible aggression will not be employed by either country as an instrument of international policy. ("Joint Anglo-German declaration not to use aggression".)<sup>7</sup> This should not take the form of a non-aggression pact between the two countries, but of a general declaration on a political principle, whereby both countries renounced the use of forcible aggression as an instrument of policy. Here Sir Horace takes the view that such a declaration would make Britain's guarantees to Poland and Rumania superfluous, since, as a result of such a declaration, Germany would not



attack these States and they could not therefore feel that their national existence was threatened by Germany.

2) Mutual declarations of non-interference ("non-interference")<sup>7</sup> by Germany in respect of the British Commonwealth of Nations and by Great Britain in respect of Greater Germany. I drew attention to the fact that it was not only a question of the frontiers of States and possessions, but also of territories of special interest and of economic influence. For Germany this would apply especially to East and South East Europe. Sir Horace replied that this point needed especially careful political wording and that the political definition would probably best result from an examination of Germany's economic interests. Britain was only interested in keeping her share of European trade.

*Note.* By the declarations of principle in respect of (1) and (2) the British apparently wish to establish a new platform for dealing with the questions between Germany and Poland. The Danzig question, after a broad German-British agreement, would play a minor part for Britain.

3) The Colonial and/or Mandates question. A German-British declaration on a fundamental revision of the relevant provisions of the Versailles Treaty.

As other States besides Great Britain administer mandates, amongst which are former German colonial territories, the position adopted by the British would be the starting-point for opening up the colonial question as a whole. As to the practical solution of the colonial question, members of the Cabinet have from time to time discussed plans, of which one plan is dealt with under: "C. Economic Questions".

### *B. Military Questions*

A German-British declaration on the limitation of armaments and a common policy towards third countries.

1) Naval agreement.

2) Air agreement.

3) Army agreement.

The Naval Agreement would be suitably modelled on the experiences of the previous agreement.

The Air Agreement and the Army Agreement should take into account the special strategic and military conditions of the British Empire and of the Greater German Reich in Central Europe.

The German-British agreements would have to be brought into relation with existing agreements, and agreements newly to be concluded, with third countries.

### *C. Economic Questions*

1) A German-British declaration on a common policy for the supply of raw materials and food to both countries and an agreement on the

export of German and British industrial products to the principal markets.

*Note.* Should German-British cooperation in all fields be desired, I consider it possible, from my knowledge of the views of leading British politicians, to ensure the long term cooperation of the two greatest European industrial nations. By directing the great national economic forces, which could be expanded in Europe and in the world under the leadership of Germany and Britain through the cooperation of their Governments, an unprecedented economic boom could be achieved and a further raising of the peoples' standards of living, which would be a determining factor for an industrial epoch. Systematic German-British cooperation would, above all, extend to the economic development of three great markets:

The British Empire (especially India, South Africa, Canada, Australia).

China (in cooperation with Japan).

Russia (assuming that Stalin's policy develops accordingly).

German-British cooperation, which would secure peace for a foreseeable period, opens up unlimited new possibilities for all the forces of labour and capital in view of modern industrial equipment. The dangers of unemployment during the change-over of industrial production from armaments to the production of capital and consumer goods could be avoided in conjunction with these plans. It would be possible within the framework of German-British cooperation to finance the reorganization of British and German industry. Large scale economic planning by Britain and Germany would make possible the long term financing of the latest raw material and industrial projects in other continents.

2) *Colonial Questions.* In connection with German-British economic cooperation, Mr. Hudson discussed the plan for a "colonial condominium" in Africa. Underlying this plan is the idea of a common opening up of Africa by the European colonial powers. It would be a question of a large integrated territory, which would embrace the greater part of tropical and sub-tropical Africa. Togoland, Nigeria, the Cameroons, the Congo, Kenya, Tanganyika (German East Africa), Portuguese and Spanish West and East Africa and Northern Rhodesia might be included. In this territory the production of raw materials and food, the investment of capital goods, foreign trade and currency, transport, administration, police and military control could be uniformly organized.

According to Sir Horace Wilson, other practical solutions of the colonial problem are also possible.

Mr. Hudson said he was not allowed to speak officially of an understanding between British and German industry; but he supported any practical arrangement which came to his knowledge. Naturally,

Britain wanted to win the next war; but he would consider himself more than foolish if he did not try to speak to me now instead of at the next Peace Conference. After a war the present problems would be distinctly more difficult for all participants than they are now.

3) A joint German-English declaration on the relation of both countries' currencies to each other, on the basis of an international debt settlement for Germany. Loans for the German Reichsbank. Restoration of the link between the European capital markets. Settlement of South East Europe's currency and debt question led by the Berlin market. Adjustment of the most favoured nation clause to the special conditions of production of the European agricultural nations.

German-British agreement on the British share in the markets within the special economic spheres of interest of the Greater German Reich in Eastern and South East Europe.

On the question as to when the negotiations should be held, I should like to point out that the Prime Minister, as leader of the Conservative Party, must decide for the middle of September on what programme he wants to fight the General Election, which, according to confidential information from Sir Joseph Ball, is scheduled for November 14. Sir Joseph Ball believes the Election will result in Neville Chamberlain and the Conservative Party remaining in power for a further five years.

Sir Horace Wilson said, on parting, that he saw the possibility of a common foreign trade policy for the two greatest European industrial States. Neither Britain nor Germany could, alone, and in competition with all the other industrial countries, bring about anything like so great an economic expansion as a systematically directed cooperation would achieve.

Sir Horace said: If the Führer would agree to conversations, this would be regarded as a sign of returning confidence.

I request instructions as to whether and in what form I can give Sir Horace an answer.<sup>9</sup>

WOHLTHAT

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<sup>9</sup> No instructions have been found. A copy of this memorandum was sent with a cover letter of Aug. 4, from Weizsäcker to Dirksen (not printed, 2196/473605), in which he stated that Ribbentrop had informed Hesse, the Press Adviser at the London Embassy, of the memorandum.

No. 717

2130/465978-79

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Mackensen*

BERLIN, July 24, 1939.

DEAR FRIEND: I am sending you enclosed for your information copies of:

- 1) a memorandum presented by the Hungarian Minister on June 28, 1939,<sup>1</sup>
- 2) a letter from Minister von Erdmannsdorff to me of July 14,<sup>2</sup>
- 3) my reply to this of today.<sup>3</sup>
- 4) a minute on a conversation between Ambassador Ritter and the Hungarian Minister, here on the Hungarian memorandum under reference.<sup>4</sup>

As to the meeting of the German and Italian Commissions for Military Policy and War Economy, which was originally envisaged for an earlier date,<sup>5</sup> this meeting has, as a result of the conversations held in Rome by Ambassador Ritter on July 5 and 6<sup>6</sup> of which he informed you orally, been postponed until later, perhaps about the middle of August. Since no great eagerness has so far been shown on the Italian side for beginning the work of these Commissions, it is for the moment our intention not to appear too keen either. Nor is it, on the other hand, impossible that we shall take the initiative nevertheless in arranging a date for the proposed meeting. I enclose for the Embassy's files the memorandum which Ritter has composed on his conversations in Rome.

With kindest regards,

Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 578, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (2130/465985-86). In this letter Erdmannsdorff reported a conversation on July 13 with Count Csáky, who had expressed the wish to meet Ribbentrop unofficially, whilst on a private visit to Germany. He wished to know the German position on the Hungarian Memorandum, which the visit of the Chief of the Hungarian General Staff, General Werth, had not clarified. In a postscript, dated July 17, Erdmannsdorff reported that General Werth had requested him to use his influence to secure an early reply to the Hungarian Memorandum, and had urged that the visit of General Thomas to Budapest, mentioned by Keitel, should take place as soon as possible.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (2130/465987-88). In this letter Weizsäcker replied that he had informed Ribbentrop accordingly, and enclosed a copy of the Hungarian Memorandum and of Ritter's minute on his conversation with Sztójay (see footnote 4); he knew nothing of any plan to send General Thomas to Budapest.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 706.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 527.

<sup>6</sup> In a minute of July 10 (not printed, 2130/465994-98) Ritter recorded his conversations with General Cavallero in Rome on July 5-7 on the composition of the Italian Commissions. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 437.

## No. 718

F6 313-17

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*

FUSCHL, July 25, 1939.

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER  
RIBBENTROP AND AMBASSADOR ATTOLICO

Ambassador Attolico stated, at the beginning of the conversation,

that Count Magistrati had been received a few days ago by the Duce personally and that the attached document<sup>1</sup> was a personal memorandum for him (Attolico) drawn up by Count Magistrati on the latter's conversation with the Duce. In explanation of this memorandum, Attolico made the following remarks:

1) If the Führer had decided to go to war, Mussolini would also be prepared to do so at any time.

2) If, however, the Führer shared the Duce's view that, for the Axis, the present moment was not the most favourable for a war, then, in Mussolini's opinion, something would have to be done to prevent war breaking out not on the initiative of the Axis. The whole world, and indeed the Italian people too, was so much on edge that today war would be preferred to uncertainty. (Magistrati told me later that the Italian people had steady nerves.) Simultaneously the danger existed that the Poles, for whom an early war would be a trump card, would provoke one without action by us.

3) Should war not be wanted at the present moment, it was essential that the initiative for the maintenance of peace should rest with the Führer and the Duce. For this reason the Duce was putting forward the idea of a conference. He had in mind a conference that should conform to the Führer's desires for precise diplomatic preparations and a restriction of the number of participants. Furthermore, it was not his intention to restrict the subjects to be dealt with by the conference merely to the Polish question. Nor would it be necessary for the Führer or the Duce to take part personally in the conference.

The Duce expected the conference to disrupt the unity of the front opposing us, both between the States and the different peoples. The Duce was also of the opinion that, once seated round the conference-table, we would be the stronger.

To Mussolini the idea of the conference presented only a question of tactics: he wished to bridge the period during which a war threatened to break out independently of our initiative. Above all, he also held the view that a meeting between him and the Führer on the German-Italian frontier would cause such a sensation that it would be impossible for such a conference not to produce positive results. Lacking a positive result, an impression of weakness or disunity within the Axis would be created. The fact that Germany and Italy were so closely allied would, on such an occasion, call for a clear decision on war or peace before the whole world. Vague words about peace would not suffice.

The Foreign Minister first stressed that he naturally could not express an official opinion on the Duce's proposals as he could in no way forestall the Führer. After a detailed *exposé* of the brilliant position of the

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Enclosure Ia; see also document No. 711. For Attolico's report of this conversation, see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, Nos. 677, 678 and 687.

Axis in foreign policy, the Foreign Minister spoke as follows, on being asked for his personal opinion on Mussolini's ideas:

1) He welcomed, as always, Mussolini's clear attitude, should the Führer hold that the present moment was opportune for war.

2) He thought that the so-called "war of nerves" could only turn out well for the Axis, whose peoples and leaders undoubtedly had steadier nerves than their opponents. This had already shown itself in recent weeks.

3) In principle, the Führer too thought that it would be a more favourable time for a war four or five years hence.

4) Poland would immediately be annihilated if she

(a) attacked Danzig,

(b) resorted to such intolerable provocation as to be irreconcilable with German honour.

The decisive stroke would probably last some eight to ten days.

5) He thought, without wanting to forestall the Führer on this, that the Führer wanted to conduct his Polish policy in such a way that no general European conflagration would arise from it.

6) He must ask himself what advantages would accrue to the Axis from a general conference? Furthermore, he did not consider it possible today to sit down to a conference with the Polish Government, after they had informed us at the time that to follow up the Führer's offer would constitute a cause for war.

7) But even apart from this, the Foreign Minister was convinced that any peace initiative by the Axis would be interpreted as a sign of weakness by the enemy Powers. He considered it out of the question that the Western Powers were today seeking war on their own account, as Britain was neither ready militarily nor had she concluded what seemed to her to be the necessary coalition of alliances. The daily letters of warning from British friends testified to this. He thought therefore that time was on our side and that if we persisted in our previous tenacious attitude the Danzig question would be solved in our way.

As the Italians particularly stressed the Duce's argument, whereby a meeting on the Brenner Pass should be presented to the world in a special form, that is in the sense of "war or peace", the Foreign Minister expressed the view that there was also a third possibility, namely, neither the one nor the other, as there was nothing exceptional in a meeting of the two Heads of Governments of allied countries. The Foreign Minister considered the communiqué submitted by the Italians (which is obviously the work of Magistrati and has not been seen by Mussolini), to be out of the question as it would give the impression of being a sign of weakness, for which there was not the slightest occasion. In the Foreign Minister's view, such a communiqué should consist only of one lapidary sentence, which would bring home to the world the

whole might and strength of the Axis, but which need be in no way bellicose.

Finally, it was considered whether the meeting-place of the two Heads of Governments should not be transferred to Florence, in order to avoid the sensational character of a meeting on the frontier. There was also discussion of the idea that the Führer as German Supreme Commander should attend the manoeuvres in Upper Italy in the first weeks of August and so meet Mussolini. The Foreign Minister is very much in favour of one of the last two possibilities, as, in the case of Florence, the private nature of the Führer's visit could be emphasized, and, on the other hand, the manoeuvres would provide a normal pretext for a meeting between the German Supreme Commander and the Italian Commander.

In concluding his remarks, the Foreign Minister emphasized once again that all his statements were only his personal opinions and he asked that they should not be communicated to Rome. Only the Führer could give a responsible answer to the communication from the Head of the Italian Government.

BRÜCKLMEIER

F1/0263

[Enclosure]

FUSCHL, July 25, 1939.

Attolico brought with him:

- I) Secret and urgent message for Ambassador Attolico.
- Ia) Annex to I.
- II) Proposal about time and place of the meeting.
- III) Draft of a possible communiqué.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting at the foot of this list: "Settled."

F1/0270-71

[I]

*Secret and Urgent Message for Ambassador Attolico*

The Duce, it seems, would have in mind to make the next meeting, which is shortly to take place on the Brenner, a real occasion of great international significance and at the same time of reaffirming the indissoluble friendship between Germany and Italy.

Magistrati, who will be in Berlin on Monday morning, will bring you instructions and give you details of our plan. In view of its extreme secrecy and importance this plan must be dealt with by Your Excellency personally, direct and exclusively with Minister von Ribbentrop, so that it may be brought to the Führer's knowledge without delay. You should therefore immediately request to be received by Minister

von Ribbentrop, in order to speak to him wherever he may be. It would be useful if Magistrati accompanied you there as he can give you any possible details and explanation.

Please let me have your confirmation [*sic*]<sup>3</sup>.

CIANO

<sup>3</sup> In the Italian version of this message (for which see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 640, and which is there dated July 22) this sentence reads: "Please treat as confidential."

100/64569-74

[Ia]

*Magistrati Memorandum*<sup>4</sup>

1) It is evident that at the present moment the meeting shortly to take place on the Brenner is destined to cause wide international repercussions. It is, in fact, clear that the announcement of the meeting will attract the attention of the whole world, which impatiently and anxiously awaits the decisions which may be reached there.

2) Above all it must be stated *plainly* and *unmistakably* that, if the Führer considers that the right moment for a war has now really arrived, Italy will be prepared to agree to it *one hundred per cent.* If Germany has to mobilize, Italy will do so likewise and *at the same time*, as she intends to fulfil her obligations completely with all her resources. Let this, as already said, be *clear*.

3) Having said this, it will be for consideration during the conversation, always assuming that the Führer will not arrive at the Brenner resolutely convinced of the necessity for an immediate war, whether the outbreak of a war would today be more expedient or less so. In this connection it must be explained that the views and information coming in from all quarters cause the Italians seriously to assume that, in case of action against or in Danzig, not only would Poland, in her present state of hysteria, *not* remain calm, but that the Western Powers, and especially France, could *not* for their part remain disinterested. Paris would go to war, and London could not but follow suit.

As the Duce has already explained to the Führer in his memorandum, entrusted to General Cavallero,<sup>5</sup> which confirms the ideas already expressed in Milan,<sup>6</sup> Italy for various reasons does not believe that the present would be the most favourable moment for the Axis Powers. A war would, in fact, immediately become immobile as regards land operations, on the Franco-German frontier in the West, and on the

<sup>4</sup> The film of the Foreign Minister's copy of this memorandum (F1/0272-83) has part of the text missing. The full version here printed is from the copy sent by Weizsäcker to Mackensen in Rome, under cover of a letter dated Aug. 7 (not printed, 100/64568) stating it was strictly secret and for him only. This copy is headed as above. For the Italian version see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 662, where the date is given as July 24.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 459.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 341.



Italo-French Alpine frontier. The defence preparations on both sides are in fact so strong that any offensive by the two belligerents would become doubtful and difficult. The war in the West would therefore at once assume the character of air and sea warfare. Italy, knowing that in the coming year, 1940, she can count on having at least six battleships, two of which will be absolutely new and capable of holding at least eight enemy battleships in the Mediterranean, would, if war were to come in 1939, risk losing this very favourable opportunity, which would be of great moment to her.

4) To this must be added the further, *very important*, consideration, that Spain, who, according to the impressions gained there by Count Ciano at first-hand, is actually moving towards a sure and definite friendship with the Axis Powers, a friendship which in all probability will soon turn into a *true and real alliance*, would, if war were declared today, be surprised by events and be unable to contribute more than benevolent neutrality. In the near future, however, Spain, seeing the impressive speed with which her wounds are beginning to heal, might represent a factor of really decisive importance in a war in Western Europe and the Mediterranean. The anti-French spirit in Spain is making further progress. Furthermore, Franco is thinking of maintaining an army of at least half a million men under arms, and has even started fortifying the Pyrenees. But it must be repeated that he cannot be expected to be ready at this moment to undertake any kind of dangerous action against France.

5) In these circumstances we must in fact consider whether the immediate outbreak of war now is expedient, because undoubtedly, owing to the present war of nerves and the Western Powers' boosting of the idea of war, democratic public opinion is in fact sufficiently united over, and aware of, the necessity for military action against the authoritarian countries. In other words, war today would come as a *surprise*; yet one of the greatest advantages for the Axis Powers is particularly that of being able to move at once, at the most unexpected moment, in order to gain the maximum successes immediately. It seems likely that, in some months' time, democratic public opinion will end by tiring of the present nervous strain, and that the possibility of a surprise will undoubtedly present itself more strongly once more.

6) Reverting to the meeting on the Brenner, it is evident that if this meeting should not lead to any initiative of real significance, but merely end in another hackneyed reaffirmation pure and simple of their desire for peace by the two Leaders of the Axis Powers, this would be regarded by adversaries and friends alike as a failure, and would give rise to the most varied interpretations. There would not even be lacking those who would say that difficulties were already beginning to appear within the Axis immediately after the conclusion of the Alliance. In these circumstances, and in view of the fact that the

present situation, if nothing is done to alter it, cannot but lead to war in the very near future, the Duce has considered the problem of what the best tactical means might be for bridging over the present interval so as to make it possible to reach that moment which the Axis Powers consider most favourable for the start of a war.

In other words, he has considered the possibility of Berlin and Rome adopting suitable means for undermining the united front presented by the Governments and public opinion of the democratic countries. He has therefore considered whether such means might not be provided by the idea that the initiative for an international conference should be launched from the Brenner, that is, by the two Leaders of the authoritarian Powers, which conference would be represented as capable of discussing and of resolving the present European problems. Thus Germany's and Italy's "desires" would be automatically put forward.

The character of this conference would have to be absolutely *European* in order to be able to take decisions, as already said, solely on the strictly European problems, that is, those which are of interest to the relations between the great *European* Powers. In this way Russia, which is a Power of inter-continental character, America, and Japan would be excluded. There would therefore [*sic* ?meet] round the conference table only Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain, Poland (in view of her direct interest in these problems) and, in order to create a clear counterweight to Poland, Spain, who could thus, without further ado, be represented as a Western European Great Power. Should it possibly be desired to have at the conference a neutral European observer, to represent, in a sense, the small countries, Switzerland or Holland or Sweden could, for example, be considered.

7) Such an initiative, whatever its final result, would in the meantime immediately confront the Western Powers with the alternative of accepting or rejecting the idea. And the initiative, coming unforeseen and unexpectedly, would of itself produce a certain stir in public opinion where, it is well to remember, there are certainly not lacking elements who seem to be far from wanting to plunge into a terrible war without first having examined and discussed every possibility of resolving the existing problems peacefully.

8) The first of these possibilities, that of accepting the idea of a conference, would have the advantage that with six participants round the table the Axis Powers would evidently stand a good chance of seeing the problems settled to their advantage. For Danzig, British public opinion itself, as was also shown by the recent conversation between the Duce and Sir Percy Loraine,<sup>7</sup> really regards the German *de facto* solution of the problem as already accomplished and therefore a *de jure* solution could scarcely fail to follow. Poland, at the conference

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 629.

table, would be in a very different position and it would be easier for her to swallow the pill than through unilateral German action. And progress could also evidently be made in the field of Italian problems, as well as in economic problems.

At an international conference the authoritarian countries always have, in actual fact, the advantage, since their representatives are free and ready to take any action, not being slavishly bound to public opinion. In addition to this, they have, above all, the great strength which lies in always being ready and able, in case of necessity, to bring about an immediate solution by resorting to force, whilst the democratic countries do not appear able to do so. In conclusion, therefore, if a European conference were to take place on the basis described above, Germany and Italy, closely united and sure of their movements, would stand a good chance of success.

9) However, if the democratic Powers, under pressure from the extremist elements of public opinion who, pointing to the example of Munich, would like to impose on them an attitude of so-called resistance, were to refuse, the *responsibility for future events would rest absolutely and entirely on the shoulders of the French and British Governments*. Such a refusal, on the one hand, could not but call forth divisions and discussions within the united front of Paris and London, whilst, on the other hand, it would give public opinion at home and abroad the definite impression, by, so to speak, providing proof positive, that the countries who want war in Europe today are precisely Britain and France. In this case there would evidently remain only the solution of a war which Italy and Germany, mindful of their genuine rights, are prepared to see through to the end with all the resources at their disposal.

10) In both cases, therefore, the advantages to the Axis Powers of taking such an initiative would be clear and certain. Naturally, to obtain the desired effects, this project must to the very last moment be kept as an *absolute secret*, so that, with the above-mentioned element of surprise, it can produce such a sense of uncertainty and dissension in the Governments and public opinion of Paris and London as would be apt to break down their moral and political unity.

11) In conclusion, the Duce intends to discuss the above personally with the Führer at the Brenner meeting. It must be said once again that he only intends to do so provided the Führer does not prefer to invoke the Italian-German military and political alliance immediately and to its full extent.

F1/0267-68

[II]

The meeting on the Brenner Pass will take place on Friday, August 4, if possible at 10 a.m., by which time the Führer should be able to arrive

The conversation will take place in the train and will be followed by a lunch given by the Duce in honour of the Führer. If necessary, the conversation would be continued in the afternoon, otherwise the two Leaders could leave again immediately.

If the Germans agree, the fact that the meeting is to take place should not be announced before July 30 or 31, and then by means of a short communiqué which could possibly run somewhat as follows:

"The Führer and the Duce will meet on August 4 on the Brenner Pass for an exchange of views within the framework of the Italian-German friendship and Alliance."

Please inform me as soon as possible what German personages will accompany the Führer to the Brenner.

F1/0269

[III]

*Draft for a Possible Communiqué<sup>8</sup>*

The Führer and the Duce, who have met on the Brenner Pass, after a lengthy examination of the situation, have, in face of the policy of encirclement of the Axis which is being pursued by the great Democracies, reaffirmed their desire for peace, and have agreed on the view that a conference between the interested Powers, if prepared through the normal diplomatic channels in a suitable manner, could lead to a solution of the main problems which are disturbing Europe and inaugurate a period of peace and prosperity for the peoples.

<sup>8</sup> For the Italian text see *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 647, where it is dated July 22.

No. 719

174/136007-11

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 25, 1939.

The Japanese Counsellor of Embassy called on me today to furnish, on instructions from Ambassador Oshima, the information on the Anglo-Japanese negotiations promised in his conversation with the State Secretary on July 24 (memorandum St.S. No. 591).<sup>1</sup> He stated that, following upon the conversation with the State Secretary, the Ambassador had telegraphed to Tokyo enquiring whether in connection with the Anglo-Japanese negotiations a statement had been made on European questions, and in particular on Japan's neutrality in a European conflict. The reply had just arrived and was in the negative. The statement issued in Tokyo and London on the Anglo-Japanese

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 713.

conversations, of which he handed me the appended copy,<sup>2</sup> gave a full description of the agreements reached. The Japanese Foreign Minister, in his telegram to Ambassador Oshima, had added that no change had taken place in Japanese policy, and had asked him to pass on this information.

I asked the Counsellor of Embassy whether perhaps, as French newspapers had reported, the Japanese Minister President had made such statements on Japan's attitude in a European conflict otherwise than in connection with the Anglo-Japanese negotiations. Mr. Usami did not return a quite definite answer to this question. He was merely of the opinion that the Japanese diplomatic missions abroad would be informed by telegram of important statements by members of the Government. The Embassy had not received any such information. He did not believe therefore that such a statement had been made. (Our Embassy in Tokyo have already been instructed to report by telegram.)

The Counsellor of Embassy then went into more detail about the Anglo-Japanese negotiations. He mentioned that the published agreement corresponded almost exactly with the proposals originally submitted to the British Ambassador by the Japanese Foreign Minister. Sir Robert Craigie had objected that the text represented in a sense *carte blanche* for Japanese policy in China, but he had had no success with this argument. He had moreover pointed out that the text made it appear that Britain had bowed to Japanese dictation. The Japanese Foreign Minister had taken the force out of this argument by saying that the text was exactly in the terms of an agreement already reached.

I then spoke to Mr. Usami about Lord Halifax having stated<sup>3</sup> that Japan had made certain promises about the treatment of British subjects in China. Mr. Usami gave the following explanation: The British Ambassador had indeed demanded that Japan should issue a declaration on the suppression of the anti-British movement in that part of China under Japanese control. The Japanese Foreign Minister had, however, refused to issue such a declaration under the agreement reached, but had nevertheless declared himself ready to examine the question in the special conversations on Tientsin, under the aspect of the preservation of order.

These special conversations on Tientsin had begun yesterday. They dealt with the maintenance of public order and security as well as with economic questions. The latter questions were concerned particularly

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<sup>2</sup> This statement, forming the enclosure to the document here printed, was made by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons and by the Foreign Secretary in the House of Lords on July 24. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 350, cols. 994-996, and *H. of L.*, vol. 114, cols. 368-369.

<sup>3</sup> In the House of Lords on July 24, see footnote 2.

with the fact that Japan had established a new bank of issue in occupied China which was authorized to issue banknotes. British policy had hitherto been opposed to this new issue; in particular Chinese and foreign banks within the Concession had attempted to thwart the new Japanese currency policy. The question of silver reserves held by the banks in the Concession was also linked up with this.

Finally Mr. Usami also explained that the talks between Japan and Britain could not be limited to the question of Tientsin, but that a whole series of further questions still needed discussion later. The Japanese Government, however, had a certain understanding for the fact that Britain could not completely reverse her China policy from one day to the next.

Mr. Usami stated he was prepared to continue to keep us currently informed.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom fully recognize the actual situation in China where hostilities on [a] large scale are in progress and not[e] that, as long as that state of affairs continues to exist, the Japanese forces in China have special requirements for the purpose of safeguarding their own security and maintaining public order in the regions under their control and that they have to suppress or remove any such acts or causes as will obstruct them or benefit their enemy. His Majesty's Government have no intention of countenancing any acts or measures prejudicial to the attainment of the above mentioned objects by the Japanese forces and they will take this opportunity to confirm their policy in this respect by making it plain to the British authorities and British nationals in China that they should refrain from such acts and Me[a]sures.

No. 720

230/151999

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 25, 1939.

[Pol. I Vbd. 329.]<sup>1</sup>

As instructed,<sup>2</sup> I asked the Yugoslav Minister, who today took leave of me before going to Bayreuth, when Yugoslavia would leave the

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (8418/E592819).

<sup>2</sup> In a minute of July 18 from Salzburg (not printed, 8418/E592817) addressed to Weizsäcker and Woermann, Erich Kordt stated that Ribbentrop wished the question put to the Yugoslav Minister, when opportunity arose, as to when Yugoslavia would leave the League, since Cincar-Marković had told Ribbentrop this could scarcely be done before September.

League of Nations in accordance with the discussions which took place here during the Prince Regent's visit.<sup>3</sup> M. Andrić said he could not answer this question. At the moment, as he had already stated several times, Yugoslavia was pursuing the tactics of withdrawing step by step from participation in the political functions of the League of Nations. This had already been shown through the withdrawal of the permanent delegate, through the refusal to take the chair at the Council in September<sup>4</sup> and through non-participation in a number of Commissions, from which the Yugoslav delegate had dropped out for one reason or another. I told the Minister that we had wanted Yugoslavia to withdraw already this summer, but after the discussions we had expected it in September.

It might well be advisable again to give Minister von Heeren instructions on the matter.<sup>5</sup>

WOERMANN<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 474.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 40 of July 25 from Geneva (not printed, 8418/E592818) Krael reported that the Yugoslav Government had formally declined the Chairmanship of the League Council, though without reason given.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Ribbentrop's handwriting: "Yes." See also document No. 733.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal notes: (i) In Ribbentrop's handwriting: "[For] F[ührer]." (ii) "Resubmit with reply to previous instructions [see document No. 675, footnote 3] to Heeren, at the latest by 5/8. W[eizsäcker] 31/7." A copy of this memorandum and telegram No. 40 from Geneva (see footnote 4) were sent to Belgrade on July 28 (8418/E592820).

## No. 721

1724/401043-46

### *Minute by the President of the Danzig Senate*

DANZIG, July 25, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Pol. V 7305.

1) The High Commissioner, Professor Burckhardt, telephoned me on Sunday the 23rd at 1:30 p.m. In this conversation he said that he must see me urgently and asked me if I could receive him at once. He then travelled out to see me and told me the following:

Gauleiter Forster had telephoned and told him that he had received news that the Poles had planned to set up an armed railway guard for the railway lines in Danzig in the night of Sunday to Monday and that this railway guard was to go on duty the same night.<sup>2</sup> Burckhardt should immediately protest about this to the Polish Government through Minister Chodacki and dissuade the Poles from their intention

<sup>1</sup> Marginal notes: "(1) Sent by Consul General von Janson. (2) To be submitted to: (a) Deputy Director of the Political Department; (b) Under State Secretary, Political Department; (c) State Secretary. (3) Resubmit. Sch[liep]. 31/7."

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 450.

and state that this railway guard would in any case be disarmed by the Danzig authorities.

M. Burckhardt told me that he had always been willing and would continue to be willing to talk to the Gauleiter and to receive reports from him but he must nevertheless insist that he could only accept commissions [*Aufträge*] of a political nature, in particular regarding Poland, from me. He requested to be informed whether he ought to carry out the wishes of the Gauleiter or not.

I had up to that time no information of these reports from agents and had not been informed about these reports either by the proper departments of the State or by the Gauleiter. I had also no information whatever from the Gauleiter about his political wishes in this matter. I requested the High Commissioner nevertheless to comply with the Gauleiter's wishes, since this was not an occasion for formalities or points of prestige; and, even if only a fraction of these reports were really correct, action must be taken. I asked him to try and get in touch with Minister Chodacki or his representative and to demand an explanation of the reports received by us.

At Professor Burckhardt's wish we agreed that he should inform me as soon as possible about the results of his efforts and that I should make appropriate use of the information. I told him that I, for my part, would report the result to the Gauleiter without delay.

After about an hour and a half, the High Commissioner visited me again at my house and told me he had ascertained the following: M. Chodacki had gone on a Sunday trip to Jurata. His representative, Counsellor Perkowski, was also absent from Danzig. The next senior ranking officer whom he had been able to reach was the Polish Colonel attached to the Diplomatic Representation, whom he had sent for from the Westerplatte. This Colonel had replied to pressing representations that he would give the High Commissioner his word of honour that he knew nothing of any such intention. He said further that the Polish Government would not be so stupid as to provoke fresh complications in the present situation through an armed railway guard.

I informed the Gauleiter by telephone of the answer received. The Gauleiter expressed himself on the telephone very excitedly to the effect that he could not tolerate the High Commissioner coming to me when he received instructions<sup>3</sup> from him, the Gauleiter. I answered the Gauleiter to the effect that he must have that out with the High Commissioner and not with me. I had not asked the High Commissioner to come to me, as I had known nothing of the whole story. Moreover, it should be remembered that the High Commissioner was a foreigner, who considered himself bound by certain forms. Whether these

<sup>3</sup> This word (*Anweisungen*) has been heavily underlined and two exclamation marks made in green crayon in the margin.



forms were observed by the High Commissioner or not was his own affair, which the Gauleiter would please to settle with him alone.

2) Between the High Commissioner's first and second visits and on Sunday afternoon and Monday morning,<sup>4</sup> I ascertained the following by questioning all offices:

Early on Sunday an agent's report had come in, which was made available both to the Political Police and the City Police. The Political Police, Oberregierungsrat Dr. Tröger, investigated this report and found it incorrect. For this reason no information was given to me. On the basis of the report to the City Police, Major-General Eberhardt and SS-Oberführer Schäfer paid a personal visit and informed the Gauleiter on Sunday morning. Whether the report was investigated by the State Police or whether they obtained the agreement of the Political Police is not known to me. The Gauleiter, as a result of the visit of these two gentlemen, telephoned the High Commissioner and conveyed to him his wishes and/or commissions [*Aufträge*]. Meanwhile the officials in the Foreign Department of the Senate were alerted, in order to study the legal and actual bases for the introduction of a Polish railway guard in Danzig.

3) I confirm that the whole apparatus need not have been set in motion, if Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher as Director of the Foreign Affairs Department, or myself as head of the Government had been previously notified. Both Dr. Böttcher and myself have long years of experience behind us in judging this sort of agent's report and, further, a whole fund of experience regarding the propagation of Polish wishes and the defence against them in every possible field of public life in Danzig. From a complete knowledge of the subject, I would have been able to give a judgement on this agent's report and on the legal bases and forms without more ado.

I further confirm that through the incorrect handling of this affair and through the issue of instructions to the High Commissioner the Danzig authorities have shown themselves as manifestly nervous to the High Commissioner, and also very much so to the Poles, which in the present situation ought to be avoided at all costs.

GREISER

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<sup>4</sup> i.e., July 23 and 24.

## No. 722

F1/0375-80

*Foreign Minister Bonnet to Foreign Minister Ribbentrop*

PERSONAL

PARIS, July 25, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR HERR VON RIBBENTROP:

I am in receipt of the letter you addressed to me,<sup>2</sup> marked "Personal", in reply to the communication I myself made on July 1 to Count von Welozreck.<sup>3</sup>

There is one point which I am anxious to make absolutely clear. At no time either before or after the Declaration of December 6,<sup>4</sup> has it been possible for the German Government to think that France had decided to disinterest herself in the East of Europe.

At the time of the conversations of December 6<sup>5</sup> I reminded you that since 1922 we had had a Treaty of Alliance with Poland<sup>6</sup> and since 1935 a Pact with the U.S.S.R.,<sup>7</sup> both of which we are determined to maintain. At that time I gave definite assurances on this point to the Ambassadors of Poland<sup>8</sup> and of the U.S.S.R.<sup>9</sup> in communications which were given the widest publicity in the press. I remember, moreover, that at the time when I reminded you of the Treaties which bound us to Poland, you were good enough to reply that these Treaties could not disturb Franco-German relations, since your own relations with Poland were at that time excellent.

I was the less surprised at the assurance you gave me as, three months earlier, Herr Hitler had, in his speech at the Sports Palace in Berlin on September 26 last, referred to the German-Polish Agreement<sup>10</sup> as a model of its type:

"Within barely one year we succeeded," he said, "in arriving at an understanding with him (Marshal Pilsudski) which by its very nature has removed the possibility of conflict, at all events for ten years. We

<sup>1</sup> The original of this document is in French; the date on it has been filled in by hand. The date on the German translation made of it (F1/0381-88) is also given as "July 25", but the *French Yellow Book*, No. 168, gives the date as "July 21" as does the copy sent by Bonnet to Halifax under cover of a letter dated July 27 (see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 471), although the cover letter refers to it as having been transmitted "yesterday". No documents concerning the transmission of this letter to Berlin have been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 669, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> Documents Nos. 602 and 603.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 369.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, documents Nos. 370 and 372 and the *French Yellow Book*, No. 32.

<sup>6</sup> The Political Agreement between France and Poland, signed in Paris, Feb. 19, 1921, and ratified on June 27, 1922. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 118, pp. 342-343.

<sup>7</sup> The Treaty of Mutual Assistance between France and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, signed in Paris, May 2, 1935. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 139, pp. 474-477.

<sup>8</sup> Juliusz Łukasiewicz.

<sup>9</sup> Jakob Souritz.

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 101, footnote 5.

are all of us convinced that this understanding will lead to a lasting peace. We appreciate that we have here two peoples who have to live side by side. A State with a population of thirty-three millions will always seek an outlet to the sea; it was therefore necessary to find the way to an agreement. This has been found and is steadily being developed. The decisive factor should be a firm determination on the part of the two Governments, and all reasonable and level-headed men among the two peoples and in the two countries, to work for a constant improvement of their mutual relations."

In addition to this, in the course of our conversation on December 6, one of the most pressing requests which I had to make to Your Excellency was in respect of our common guarantee to Czechoslovakia in fulfilment of the Munich agreement. I could not have addressed such a request to you if France had no longer attached importance to what was happening in Eastern Europe.

Since I was unable to obtain a satisfactory reply on this matter, I sent you a note on February 8, 1939,<sup>11</sup> invoking the Agreement signed at Munich on September 29,<sup>12</sup> in order once more to impress upon you the necessity of granting without delay our common guarantee to Czechoslovakia, a note by [*sic* ? to] which you replied on March 3,<sup>13</sup> asking me to wait until internal developments in Czechoslovakia were clearer and relations between that country and the neighbouring States had improved, before considering a general arrangement between the Munich signatory Powers.

Further, the actual statement which I made from the rostrum of the French Chamber on January 26, 1939, confirmed my attitude in a manner which admitted of no equivocation. This statement, which you may find in our *Journal Officiel* (p. 234), was reproduced in the press throughout the world.

"France has also maintained her traditional friendly relations with Poland. At the time of the Franco-German Declaration of December 6, I had, in conformity with the spirit of our agreement, advised the Polish Ambassador of our intentions. In thanking me for keeping them informed, the Polish Government expressed to me their appreciation of an action, the aim, the significance and the implication of which they fully realized.

"Thus, Gentlemen, we can dispose of the legend that our policy has led to the cancellation of our obligations in the East of Europe with the U.S.S.R. or with Poland.

"These obligations are still binding and must be honoured in the spirit in which they were entered into."

Thus there is nothing equivocal. You knew the Treaty which unites

<sup>11</sup> For the text of this Note see the *French Yellow Book*, No. 47.

<sup>12</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 675.

<sup>13</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 175, and the *French Yellow Book*, No. 51.

France and Poland. You never dreamed of asking me to denounce it on the occasion of the Franco-German Declaration of December 6. At the time when we signed that Declaration your relations with Poland were excellent and there was nothing in the Franco-Polish relations likely to arouse susceptibilities on your part.

In the speech he made in the Reichstag on January 30, 1939, Chancellor Hitler once again expressed his satisfaction at the understanding between Germany and Poland. "At this moment," he declared, "it would be difficult to discover any divergence of opinion amongst the true friends of peace as to the value of this agreement" (the German-Polish Pact of Non-Aggression). These words were the more significant from our point of view because they were uttered some weeks after an important conversation at Berchtesgaden between Herr Hitler and the Polish Foreign Minister, M. Beck.<sup>14</sup>

In March relations between Germany and Poland became strained, and that fact brought about a new situation.

France bears no responsibility for the development of these relations between Berlin and Warsaw. She has in fact always refrained, and will continue to refrain, from any interference in matters bearing upon the special relations of the two neighbouring countries, and not liable to affect the general international situation and the maintenance of peace.

In conformity with the statements which I had the honour to make to Count von Welczeck, we earnestly hope that a contractual arrangement between Germany and Poland may prove feasible. But there is one point that I am bound to bring to your notice, particularly in view of the conversations which I had with you on December 6 and 7 in Paris, namely, that France is bound to Poland by a Treaty of Alliance, and will, true to her bond, scrupulously carry out all her promises.

You are good enough, in reminding me of all the efforts which you yourself have made to bring about a *rapprochement* between France and Germany, to call my attention to the fact that Herr Hitler has always desired a Franco-German understanding and has stigmatized as "madness a new war between our two countries".

This assurance is in accordance with our sincere wishes. I desire, as you do, to ensure that friendly relations between France and Germany are maintained. It is for this reason that, in my communication of July 1, which remains fully justified and retains its full import, I made a point of reminding you, with the frankness called for by the circumstances, of the position of the French Government in respect of Poland, particularly in relation to the situation in Danzig.

France is eagerly desirous of peace. No one can doubt that. More-

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<sup>14</sup> See vol. v of this Series, document No. 119.

over, no one can doubt the determination of the French Government to fulfil their obligations. But I cannot permit it to be said that our country would be in any way responsible for war because it had honoured its signature.

I beg you, my dear Herr von Ribbentrop, to accept the expression of my sincerest regards.

GEORGES BONNET

No. 723

2106/473504

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

LONDON, July 25, 1939.

DEAR HERR VON WEIZSÄCKER: Many thanks for your friendly lines of the 13th instant<sup>1</sup> and your information that the Foreign Minister agrees to my starting my leave. As the political "season"<sup>2</sup> promises to be very lively up to the adjournment of the House of Commons on August 4, I can hardly leave before August 10. I shall of course come to Berlin first, to report to you.

I am sending you enclosed a copy of a report<sup>3</sup> which will be despatched by the same courier, giving the background of the conversations which Herr Wohlthat had here. Owing to the indiscretion of the press and Mr. Hudson's garrulity and incorrect presentation of the facts, these conversations have given the public a completely distorted picture; in many ways this is perhaps quite a good thing since, as a result, the really serious and significant part of his talks here—namely his two conversations with Sir Horace Wilson—has to some extent been kept dark; therefore the possibility of continuing them remains. If you have not yet spoken to Herr Wohlthat,<sup>4</sup> I would be grateful if you could ask him to call on you as soon as possible, so that he can report to you on all details.

With best greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

DIRKSEN

<sup>1</sup> Not printed. See document No. 674, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 710.

<sup>4</sup> Wohlthat left London for Berlin on July 21. See document No. 698.

## No. 724

388/211524

*The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 98 of July 26

HELSINKI, July 26, 1939—12:40 p.m.

Received July 26—1:25 p.m.

Pol. V 7047.

The Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> spoke to me on the subject of the German-Russian talks, and repeated a rumour that Germany intended to concede to Russia the Baltic States as a sphere of interest. I pointed out the untrustworthiness of such propaganda fairy-tales and underlined the economic character of the talks.

I request instructions by telegram as to the language I should hold.<sup>2</sup>

BLÜCHER

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<sup>1</sup> Eljas Erkko.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 726.

## No. 725

B21/B005068

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 241 of July 26

WASHINGTON, July 26, 1939—5:05 p.m.

Received July 27—3:40 a.m.

Both the Wohlthat—Hudson conversation<sup>1</sup> and the British concessions to Japan<sup>2</sup> have surprised and disappointed public opinion here, which is so often represented by the press, especially as it is inferred from the coincidence of these two factors that Britain feels herself impelled to make new concessions to the Totalitarian Powers on both the European and the Far Eastern fronts. It must be added that, as well-informed journalists report, the State Department no longer seems to believe that Stalin is seriously prepared for a triple alliance with Britain and France.

Isolationist circles naturally feel that recent events, especially the President's defeat on the neutrality question,<sup>3</sup> are a confirmation of their view that America would burn her fingers to no purpose if

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 716.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 719.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 650.

she interfered in conflicts which do not directly concern America. The American Government make a skilful retort by referring to the situation in the Far East, through Hull's declaration yesterday,<sup>4</sup> according to which American policy towards Tokyo adheres unswervingly to its former course. The country's chief newspapers also support, almost without exception, the line of foreign policy pursued by Roosevelt's Government and emphasize that Britain's regrettable appeasement of Japan directly affects American interests. These [newspapers] demand that America should do everything in her power and leave nothing undone in order to put a stop to further provocation. In the event of war, as the World War had taught, delivery of arms and ammunition to Britain and France would play only an insignificant part (in the World War twenty per cent) even if the export embargo were maintained at all. All raw materials of strategic importance would naturally be available in any desired quantities. In addition, Britain is being seriously urged to lay in a stock of easily storable raw materials already, so that, in the event of an emergency, shipping space would be mainly available for the transport of foodstuffs.

THOMSEN

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Hull told a Press Conference on July 25 that he had no comment to make on the Anglo-Japanese formula (see document No. 719, enclosure) apart from saying that the position of the United States remained as he had frequently defined it in public since the outbreak of hostilities.

On July 26 the United States Government denounced the American-Japanese Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of Feb. 21, 1911. See *Peace and War*, No. 135.

## No. 726

338/211525

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Finland*

Telegram

No. 125

BERLIN, July 27, 1939—2:35 p.m.  
zu Pol. V 7047.

With reference to your telegram No. 98.<sup>1</sup>

The rumour that Germany intends to concede the Baltic States to Russia as a sphere of interest is based on malevolent invention, the obvious aim of which is to disturb Germany's relations with the Baltic States. German-Russian talks are confined to the attempt to guide economic relations into more normal channels. The Soviet Union is known to have tried, in the Moscow negotiations with Britain and France, by means of the well-known formula about indirect aggression, to create for herself opportunities for interference in Baltic affairs.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 724.

Whether Britain will maintain the opposition which she at first offered to this, seems doubtful at present.<sup>2</sup>

WOERMANN<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "To the Director of the Economic Policy Department for countersignature".

<sup>3</sup> On July 27, Schliep also drafted a reply (388/211526) to document No. 724, which is marked in the margin "Cancelled". This draft reads as follows: "The German Government, who are understandably interested in Russian raw material supplies, are at present in touch with the Soviet Government in connection with the resumption of the economic negotiations, which as is known were broken off in February of this year, for increasing the volume of trade, which has decreased from its previous considerable figure to an insignificant amount."

"Rumours of political negotiations, particularly those regarding a non-aggression pact, are pure inventions, but there are no objections to mentioning, where necessary, that it is an obvious fact that the German press no longer attacks the Soviet Union to the same degree as it did previously. In this, however, there is nothing sensational, since the Soviet Union is the neighbour of Poland, and particularly since we have at present no differences with the Soviet Union."

## No. 727

103/111495

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 142 of July 27

Moscow, July 27, 1939—4:55 p.m.

Received July 27—6:40 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 152 of July 22.<sup>1</sup>

I called on Potemkin today in connection with current affairs. In the course of the conversation Astakhov's invitation to the Day of German Art was mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Potemkin expressed his special pleasure at the friendliness extended to Astakhov in Munich. From Potemkin's attitude the satisfaction of the Soviet Government was clearly visible. Potemkin said that things like this were of great value to mutual relations. This gave me a convenient opportunity again to describe the normalization of our relations as desirable.

To my question what he thought of the . . . (group missing)<sup>3</sup> developments in East Asia ("British-Japanese Agreement")<sup>4</sup> Potemkin answered evasively, being obviously still without instructions. On the other hand, he emphatically stated that he knew nothing of General Ironside being sent to Moscow.<sup>5</sup> When I mentioned the latest clashes on the Outer Mongolian frontier,<sup>6</sup> Potemkin showed little interest, alleging that he was without detailed information.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 700.

<sup>2</sup> Astakhov was one of the official guests when Hitler opened the exhibition of German art, in Munich on July 16.

<sup>3</sup> The Moscow draft (695/260372-73) here reads: "latest."

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 719, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> General Sir Edmund Ironside. He had been sent to Warsaw on July 17, and had returned to England on July 21.

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 688.



## No. 728

2450/515320-21

*The Foreign Ministry to the Chief of the High Command of  
the Wehrmacht*

BERLIN, July 27, 1939.

W 1205 g.Rs.

With reference to our communication W 1091 g.Rs. of July 12, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

The King of Bulgaria has again urgently requested Minister Clodius, whom he received in an audience of considerable length in Sofia,<sup>2</sup> to meet as far as possible the wishes communicated in detail to the German Government by the Minister President and the Minister of War,<sup>3</sup> and already known to you, concerning the deliveries of war material from Germany. Judging by the progress so far of the negotiations with the Bulgarian plenipotentiary General Russev, who is again present in Berlin, and the reports received by the Foreign Ministry from the competent offices of the High Command of the Wehrmacht,<sup>4</sup> I assume that these previously expressed wishes can be met in a way generally satisfactory to the Bulgarian Government.

King Boris, however, expressed a further wish, on the fulfilment of which he has personally set his heart. He has asked that the Führer be informed of his request to let Bulgaria have two German submarines of some 250 tons immediately. King Boris gave as a reason that he had definite information emanating from the Turkish General Staff that in the event of a European conflict, even if Bulgaria remained neutral, Turkey and Rumania intended to occupy the eastern part of the country in order to establish overland communication between Turkey and Rumania. Bulgaria would have to be able to defend herself by sea also against such an attack. He therefore asked that, until the Bulgarian submarines which have been ordered are completed, two small German submarines be transferred to the Bulgarian Navy. He believed that this would also be in Germany's interests should the Dardanelles be closed as might be expected.

The Foreign Ministry is of the opinion that, if at all possible, this Bulgarian wish should be acceded to, not only in view of the urgent manner in which King Boris has made it as a personal request to the Führer, but also on general political grounds.

By order:  
VON WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 659.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 656 and 673.

<sup>3</sup> Major-General Teodosi Daskalov.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 703, enclosure.

## No. 729

34/23221-27

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 27, 1939.

[W 1216 g.]<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with the instructions given me<sup>2</sup> I invited the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Astakhov, and the Head of the Trade Delegation of the U.S.S.R. here, Babarin, to dinner last night at Ewest's.<sup>3</sup> The Russians stayed until about 12:30 a.m.. The Russians took up the conversation about the political and economic problems of interest to us in a very lively and interested manner so that an informal and thorough discussion of the various topics mentioned to me by the Reich Foreign Minister was possible. The following points from the conversation should be stressed:

1) Referring to remarks by Astakhov about the former close collaboration and community of interests in foreign policy between Germany and Russia, I explained that such collaboration appeared to me attainable now, too, if the Soviet Government attached importance to it. I could visualize three stages for this:

Stage 1: Re-establishment of collaboration in the economic field through the credit and commercial treaty which we are to conclude.

Stage 2: The normalization and improvement of political relations. This would include, among other things, respecting the interests of the other party in the press and in public opinion and paying respect to the scientific and cultural activities of the other country. The official participation by Astakhov in the Day of German Art at Munich<sup>4</sup> or the invitation of German delegates to the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow, as suggested by him to the State Secretary,<sup>5</sup> could, for instance, be included under this heading.

Stage 3 would be the reestablishment of good political relations, either along the lines of what had been in existence before (Berlin Treaty)<sup>6</sup> or a new arrangement which took account of the vital political interests of both parties. This stage 3 also appeared to me attainable because controversial problems of foreign policy, which would exclude such an arrangement between the two countries, did not in my opinion exist anywhere along the line from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea and to the Far East. In addition, despite all the divergencies in philosophies

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (127/69530-36).

<sup>2</sup> No record of these instructions has been found.

<sup>3</sup> A Berlin restaurant.

<sup>4</sup> For the official opening of the exhibition by Hitler on July 16.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 714.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., the Treaty of Apr. 24, 1926; see document No. 490.

of life (*Weltanschauung*) there was *one* thing common to the ideology of Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union: opposition to the capitalist democracies. Neither we nor Italy had anything in common with the capitalism of the West. Therefore it would appear to us quite paradoxical if the Soviet Union as a Socialist State were now to wish particularly to align itself with the Western Democracies.

2) With the warm approval of Babarin, Astakhov designated the way of *rapprochement* with Germany as the one that corresponded to the vital interests of the two countries. However, he emphasized that the tempo might well be only slow and gradual. The Soviet Union had been made to feel itself most seriously menaced by National Socialist foreign policy. For our present political situation we had found the fitting term of encirclement. That was exactly how after the events of September last year the political situation had appeared to the Soviet Union. Astakhov mentioned the Anti-Comintern Pact and our relations with Japan, and furthermore Munich with the free hand we had gained there in Eastern Europe, the political consequences of which were bound to be adverse to the Soviet Union. We, indeed, regarded the Baltic States and Finland, as well as Rumania, as our sphere of interest, which had completed the Soviet Government's feeling of being menaced. Moscow could not quite believe in a shift in German policy towards the Soviet Union. A reversal could only be expected to come about gradually.

3) In my reply I pointed out that German policy in the East had taken an entirely different course in the meantime. On our part there could be no question of menacing the Soviet Union. Our aims were in an entirely different direction. Molotov himself, in his last speech, had called the Anti-Comintern Pact camouflage for an alliance aimed against the Western Democracies. He was acquainted with the Danzig question and the related Polish question. I saw in these anything but a clash of interests between Germany and the Soviet Union. That we should respect the integrity of the Baltic States and of Finland had become sufficiently clear through our non-aggression pacts and our offers in this connection. Our relations with Japan were those of a well-founded friendship which was not, however, aimed against Russia. German policy was aimed against Britain. That was the decisive factor. As I had stated previously, I could imagine a far-reaching arrangement of mutual interests with due consideration for vital Russian problems. However, this possibility would be barred the moment the Soviet Union, by signing a treaty, aligned itself with Britain against Germany. The Soviet Union would then have made its choice and be able to share with Britain in German antagonism. Only for this reason would I have any objection to his view that the tempo of a possible understanding between Germany and the Soviet Union must be slow. The time was opportune now but would no longer be so after the conclusion

of a pact with London. This should be considered in Moscow. What could Britain offer Russia? At best participation in a European war and the hostility of Germany, hardly a desirable end for Russia. What could we offer as against this? Neutrality and keeping out of a possible European conflict and, if Moscow wished, a German-Russian understanding on mutual interests which, just as in former times, would work out to the advantage of both countries.

4) During the subsequent discussion Astakhov reverted to the question of the Baltic States and asked whether, besides economic penetration, we had other far-reaching political aims there. He was equally concerned about the Rumanian question. As to Poland, he stated that Danzig would return to the Reich in one way or another and that the Corridor question also would have to be solved somehow in favour of the Reich. He asked whether the territories which once belonged to Austria were not also tending towards Germany, particularly the Galician and Ukrainian territories. After describing our commercial relations with the Baltic States, I confined myself to the statement that, in any case, no German-Russian clash of interests would result from all these questions. Moreover, the solution of the Carpatho-Ukrainian question had shown that here we did not aim at anything there that would endanger Soviet interests.

5) There was a rather far-ranging discussion about the question of why National Socialism, in the field of foreign policy, had sought the antagonism of the Soviet Union. In Moscow they had never been able quite to understand this. They had always had full understanding for political opposition to Communism at home. I took advantage of this opportunity to explain in detail our opinion concerning the change in Russian Bolshevism in recent years. The antagonism of National Socialism had arisen as something natural from the fight against the German Communist Party which was dependent upon Moscow and was only a tool of the Comintern. The fight against the German Communist Party had long been over. Communism had been eradicated in Germany. The Comintern had receded in importance far behind the Politbüro, where nowadays quite a different policy was being conducted than at the time when the Comintern predominated. The amalgamation of Bolshevism with the national history of Russia, which found expression in the glorification of great Russian men and deeds (celebration of the Battle of Poltava, Peter the Great, the Battle on Lake Peipus, Alexander Nevski) had indeed in some measure changed the international face of Bolshevism as we saw it, particularly since Stalin had postponed world revolution to the Greek Calends. In this state of affairs we saw possibilities today which we had not seen earlier, provided that no attempt whatsoever were made to conduct Communist propaganda in any form in Germany.

6) In conclusion, Astakhov stressed how valuable this conversation

had been to him. He would report it to Moscow and he hoped that it would leave visible marks on the subsequent developments there. Following on this the question of the commercial and credit treaty was discussed in detail.

7) From the statements of the Russians I had the impression that it had not yet been decided in Moscow what was ultimately to be done. The Russians kept silent about the position and prospects of the British pact negotiations. From all this it would appear that Moscow for the time being is pursuing tactics of delay and postponement towards us as well as towards Britain in order to defer decisions, the importance of which is fully realized. Hence the receptive attitude of the Russians after the various talks, particularly the attitude of Molotov, hence the spinning out of the economic negotiations in which the Russians set the pace themselves entirely, hence also, most likely, the retention of Ambassador Merekalov in Moscow.<sup>7</sup> As a further handicap must be reckoned their excessive mistrust, not only towards us but towards Britain as well. From our point of view it may well be considered an important success that Moscow today after months of negotiations with Britain still persists in uncertainty as to what to do eventually.

SCHNURRE

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 437. In a letter of July 20 (not printed, 276/178426-30) Schulenburg wrote to Schliep relating, amongst various other items of diplomatic news, that on the occasion of the Moscow sport parade he had been much surprised to meet Merekalov and his family on the diplomats' stand, and continuing: "I asked M. Merekalov when he would actually be returning to Berlin. He replied he still had leave for the whole of August. When I said then he would be in Berlin at the beginning of September, he replied 'Perhaps'. When Hilger asked him why he had not accepted my invitation, he answered that he was 'as a matter of fact not at present on duty'. All this sounds rather suspicious. Rumour here has it that Molotov intends to recall and replace by his own people all Heads of Missions appointed in Litvinov's day. Merekalov does not seem to have fallen entirely from grace or he would hardly have been on the diplomats' stand."

## No. 730

2767/535941

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 218 of July 28

TARABYA, July 28, 1939—3:35 p.m.

Received July 28—10:00 p.m.

Pol. II 2701.

1. My repeated efforts to persuade Numan to limit the liability and magnitude of fresh political commitments as much as possible seem to have resulted in the decision to abandon the proposed bipartite British and French pacts, and to conclude one tripartite pact.<sup>1</sup> This

<sup>1</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 165, 274, 283, 290, 330 and 365 and *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 684.

would have the advantage of greater elasticity, and also that Turkey could, if necessary, raise objections with one of the partners to the policy of the third if it became too burdensome to her own interests and obligations. Obviously Numan has carried through this decision in opposition to Saracoğlu who is a complete newcomer in matters of foreign policy. The day before yesterday I had a long political talk with General Ali Fuad, Director of the Military Academy, with the object of asking him to exert all the influence of the Army to ensure that the pact would contain a clause whereby, if the European situation altered, Turkey could return to a policy of strict neutrality. A despatch follows.<sup>2</sup>

2. The French Military Mission left yesterday evening for France via Germany.<sup>3</sup> There was no meeting with King Carol, who arrived privately in Istanbul on board his yacht.

3. Up to the present the Government of Iraq, by preserving silence, had not recognized the cession of Hatay.<sup>4</sup> I hear from a good source that the Turkish Foreign Minister has now been officially informed of this non-recognition.

PAPEN

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 208 of July 18 (not printed, 2767/535936) Papen had reported the arrival of the French Military Mission.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 777.

## No. 731

1625/389127-28

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 385 of July 28

PARIS, July 28, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 28—12 midnight.

Pol. II 2712.

Concerning the Moscow negotiations I learn the following from usually well-informed sources:

1. If Britain and France are now not only prepared to agree to enter into military discussions before reaching agreement on a political treaty, but are pressing for these with special zeal, this is due to three considerations.

1) Britain and France wish at all costs to avoid the negotiations being adjourned or broken off, because they believe that as long as the negotiations are being carried on, Germany will not take any action in Danzig. Political negotiations have shown some results after agreement had been reached on all points except the definition of indirect

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

attack and the methods of rendering assistance. On the latter point so many military aspects are involved that no progress can be made without simultaneous military discussions.

2) By sending two representative military missions to Moscow it is believed possible to create a favourable atmosphere for the conclusion of a political treaty also.

3) Should the military authorities agree amongst themselves, the politicians too hope to be able to exert pressure to overcome the remaining difficulties, though it is not overlooked that in the military discussions Russia will raise not only the problem of the border States but also the difficult problem of Poland and Rumania tolerating military aid.

II. The conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement<sup>2</sup> is said to have been used by the British in the Moscow negotiations in the following way: Britain had paid dearly for negotiations on Tientsin by recognizing Japanese interests in China for the duration of the conflict. She had been forced to do this because she had to keep her hands free in Europe, as long as no treaty resulted from the Moscow negotiations. Should these fail, Britain would run into difficulties as regards her position in Eastern Asia, and Russia would in the long run be exposed to ever greater pressure from Japan.

III. In connection with the Moscow negotiations the existence of the German-Russian Treaty of 1926<sup>3</sup> is said to have been discussed by the French and British. The question was examined as to whether Russia could be asked to denounce the Treaty or make a declaration that it was meaningless, but the question was apparently deferred, so as not to make the negotiations still more difficult.

IV. The French military mission, which is already being formed, is to be led by General Doumenc, General Commanding the 1st Region in Lille.<sup>4</sup> He is an artilleryman and has the reputation of being a particularly capable officer. In the war he organized transport, and, before taking a front-line command in Lille, where he at first commanded the 1st Division, was Deputy-Chief of the General Staff under Weygand.

WELCZECK

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 719.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Berlin Treaty of Apr. 24, 1926; see document No. 490.

<sup>4</sup> Comprising the *départements* of Nord and Pas-de-Calais.

No. 732

174/138019

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 603

BERLIN, July 28, 1939.

I spoke today to Admiral Foerster who has returned from his visit

to Japan. His most important piece of information was that Ambassador Ott took the view, which incidentally can also be discerned from reports of the Embassy in Tokyo, that it would be expedient to begin by concluding a treaty with the Japanese on a more modest basis for the time being, if, as may be expected, they cannot at present be won over for the absolute maximum to which we aspire.

Submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WEIZSÄCKER

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[EDITORS' NOTE: On July 28 there was initialled in Berlin a German-Japanese economic agreement due to enter into force on October 1, 1939, for two years, of which only an incomplete copy has been found in the files (not printed, 198/140764-79). A marginal note on this copy reads: "Sent to Tokyo with despatch W VII 1681 of July 31, 1939, [not found]". See also vol. VIII of this Series, document No. 27.]

### No. 733

8272/E588183

#### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Yugoslavia*

Telegram

No. 191

BERLIN, July 29, 1939—1:00 p.m.  
e.o. Pol. I Vbd. 334.

For the Minister personally.

The Yugoslav Minister has frequently represented Yugoslavia's refusal to accept the chairmanship of the Council at the September Assembly as a form of fulfilling our wish that Yugoslavia withdraw from the League of Nations, which we expressed to Cincar-Marković during the visit of the Prince Regent.<sup>1</sup> As you are aware, we, at that time, wished Yugoslavia to withdraw in June, to which the Yugoslav Foreign Minister replied that this would probably not take place before September.

We do not see in the petty methods employed by Yugoslavia in withdrawing from some functions in the League of Nations the results we expected. Please therefore ask the Foreign Minister on behalf of the Reich Foreign Minister why the withdrawal of Yugoslavia from the League of Nations is being delayed, and renew pressure for withdrawal.<sup>2</sup>

Report by telegram.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 474.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 720 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 745.



## No. 734

8515/E597407

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

No. 158 of July 29

BERLIN, July 29, 1939—1:30 p.m.

Received July 29—5:30 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 142 of July 27.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador.

Before arranging further interviews in accordance with instructions in telegram No. 152 of July 22,<sup>2</sup> please await further despatch concerning information and language to be held, now in the course of preparation.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 727.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 700.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 736.

## No. 735

174/136020-22

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

TOKYO, July 29, 1939—4:50 p.m.

No. 331 of July 29

Received July 29—2:40 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 319 of July 26.<sup>1</sup>

For the Foreign Minister personally.

The British concessions in their policy towards China, which were at first a complete surprise, are now judged more soberly. The following factors contribute to this: discrepancies between the Tokyo and London interpretations, warning statements by the Navy Minister,<sup>2</sup> who emphatically stressed future Japanese demands in Central and South China and required the formation of new squadrons, the uncompromising attitude of the Army at the front, the difficulties in certain deliberations of the Tientsin Committee<sup>3</sup> particularly on the debarment of *Fapee* currency,<sup>4</sup> and finally the American flank attack in denouncing the Commercial Treaty.<sup>5</sup> For us, at present, the following main features of the situation stand out:

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (174/136015-16/1). This telegram reported statements by the Japanese Foreign Ministry and press comments on the Anglo-Japanese formula (document No. 719, enclosure).

<sup>2</sup> Admiral Mitsumasa Yonai.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is presumably to the Anglo-Japanese Conference, then sitting in Tokyo.

<sup>4</sup> The currency of the Chinese National Government.

<sup>5</sup> This Treaty had been denounced on July 26.

1) Considerable gains in Japan's position in China, improved prospects for final Japanese success.

2) Far-reaching exposure of British weakness.

3) Continued will to fight of the Japanese Army, and especially of the Navy, against British predominance in the Far East.

4) Japan's adherence to Axis policy and the demand for a military alliance.

Latter ... (group mutilated) is based on an official communication which the Foreign Minister sent me and in particular on urgent confidential demands by the chief advocates of the idea of an alliance.

On July 28, Hotta, former Ambassador in Rome and one of the Foreign Minister's chief advisers, transmitted the following oral statement to me:

Japan's relations with Europe were not affected in any way by the Anglo-Japanese negotiations. Japan's relations with the Axis Powers as existing at the moment were not altered at all. The Italian Ambassador<sup>6</sup> had received the same communication.<sup>7</sup> Ambassador Oshima, on enquiry, had been similarly informed. The Foreign Minister had chosen Hotta to inform the Axis Ambassadors so as not to create an impression of disquiet among the Axis Powers by a personal reception which would attract attention.—The Foreign Minister's acknowledgement of the *status quo* in our relations also includes in my opinion the latest Japanese proposal for an alliance. The supporters of the idea of an alliance are advocating with great determination and singleness of purpose an early resumption of the alliance negotiations. The Minister President transmitted to me through his private secretary an urgent request that Germany should hasten the conclusion of an alliance. Japan would not hesitate about making it public even if this were to dispel any readiness by Britain and America to grant credits, which are very important for the reconstruction of Northern China. Leading men in the China Department, influential officials in the Foreign Ministry, and Army and Navy officers are urging the same course. The chief reasons for this insistence I regard as follows:

1) The conviction that Japan owes the fact that Britain gave way to the Axis Powers' united change of front [*sic*].

2) The need to continue pressure on Britain and China.

3) Anxiety lest the Foreign Minister should have received, or be receiving, more far-reaching secret British concessions. It has become known from reliable sources that Britain intends to offer extensive credits and her recognition of a future Central Government without making counter demands. The Army and Navy see in the new British tactics the danger of an undesirable half-way compromise solution.

<sup>6</sup> Giacinto Auriti.

<sup>7</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 698.

4) Great anxiety regarding a German *rapprochement* with Russia, particularly in the form of German credits.

5) Realization that it is not possible to achieve the complete elimination of reservations from the Japanese alliance proposal and that a new impetus can only come about through an accommodating initiative being taken by Germany and Italy. Informants, referring to the recent attitude of the Navy (Navy Minister's statement, blockade of Peare River) emphasize that, should the need arise, the Navy's readiness for war against Britain is also beyond doubt.

I have a strong impression that the pressure for a conciliatory attitude in the question of an alliance is not due to tactical exploitation of the Japanese success but to . . . (group mutilated) efforts of those who favour an alliance to prevent a possible setback. Therefore from my vantage point in Tokyo I would request you to give favourable consideration to Japanese suggestions and perhaps to base a German initiative on the fact that Japan has achieved visible success against our common opponent, Britain.

If need be, I recommend bringing both Japanese Ambassadors<sup>8</sup> into the scope of the initiative as they are being increasingly reproached here with not fully appreciating Japan's difficult position, which seems very undesirable in view of the great importance of both of them to the promotion of our policy.

OTT

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<sup>8</sup> i.e., Hiroshi Oshima, in Berlin, and Toshio Shiratori, in Rome.

## No. 736

127/69523-29

### *The State Secretary to the Ambassador in the Soviet Union*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 29, 1939.

Received July 31.

W 1216 g.

On the evening of July 26 Schnurre had a detailed conversation with Astakhov and Babarin, the substance of which can be seen from the enclosed memorandum.<sup>1</sup> It is to be concluded from Astakhov's reply that a detailed report from him has already been received in Moscow. Astakhov asked in conclusion whether, if a high-ranking Soviet personage discussed these questions with a high-ranking German personage, similar views would be put forward by us. Schnurre answered this question in an affirmative sense.

It would be important for us to know whether the remarks made to

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (127/69530-36). This enclosure was a copy of the memorandum printed as document No. 729.

Astakhov and Babarin have met with any response in Moscow. If you see an opportunity of arranging a further conversation with Molotov, please sound him on the same lines and, if an occasion arises, make use, for your part also, of the ideas in the memorandum. If this results in Molotov abandoning the reserve he has so far maintained you could go a step further in your exposition and put into a little more concrete form what is expressed in general terms in the memorandum. This applies in particular to the Polish question. We would be prepared, however the Polish question may develop, whether peacefully as we desire, or in some other way that is forced upon us, to safeguard all Soviet interests and to come to an understanding with the Government in Moscow. In the Baltic question too, if the talks took a positive course, the idea could be advanced of so adjusting our attitude to the Baltic States as to respect vital Soviet interests in the Baltic Sea.

WEIZSÄCKER

### No. 737

F1/0266

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SAARBRÜCKEN, July 29, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Transmitted from Berlin at 1:15 p.m.

Attolico visited me this morning to make an addition to his communications of yesterday.<sup>2</sup> From repeated telephone conversations with Count Ciano it appeared that he or rather the Duce still favoured the idea of a conference. Attolico personally interpreted the Duce's thoughts as follows: The Axis solidarity was 100 per cent. In view of the conversations in Milan and the letter presented by General Cavallero<sup>3</sup> with which the Führer agreed in principle, the Duce probably presumed that in our opinion too the right time for a general conflict had not yet come. Mussolini's real intention emerged most clearly from the draft handed to us of a communiqué to be issued after the meeting between the Führer and the Duce.<sup>4</sup> (As we know the intention to hold a conference is already expressed in this communiqué.) This draft had, in fact, been drawn up in Mussolini's own handwriting. Ciano for his part had let Attolico know that the conference idea was desirable for the reason that in a month's time it would force itself upon us of its own accord.

<sup>1</sup> Hitler, accompanied by Ribbentrop, was inspecting the fortifications in the Saarland at this time.

<sup>2</sup> No record has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. See, however, the despatch by Attolico recording a conversation with Ribbentrop of July 28, in *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 717.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 459.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 718, enclosure, item III.

Attolico interpreted Rome's intentions to the effect that no objections were to be raised to the meeting being postponed for some time, if we accepted the principle of peaceful development but had not yet quite made up our minds on how to take the first step towards such a development.

WEIZSÄCKER

No. 738

2450/515322-24

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, July 29, 1939.

DELIVERIES OF WAR MATERIAL (SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE  
MEMORANDUM OF JULY 22, 1939).<sup>1</sup>

In respect of further treatment of the delivery of war material to the countries listed in the memorandum of July 22 various points have now been clarified.

I. *Bulgaria*

General Russev, leader of the Bulgarian Delegation, expressly stated today in the Foreign Ministry that he is satisfied regarding all points with which he has to deal, and asked that his especial thanks be again conveyed to the Reich Foreign Minister for the energetic intervention of the Foreign Ministry.

The only matter still outstanding with Bulgaria is the request, not dealt with by General Russev but addressed by the King of Bulgaria directly to the Reich Foreign Minister, with the request that it be transmitted to the Führer, that two small submarines of about 250 tons be made available.<sup>2</sup> The opinion of the High Command of the Wehrmacht is that from a military point of view it would be desirable to provide these submarines, and it will for its part also use its influence towards making these submarines available.

II. *Rumania*

The Reich Ministry for Air has finally approved the Agreement concluded in Bucharest on July 8<sup>3</sup> for delivery of aircraft material to the value of approximately 60 million RM. The Legation in Bucharest has already been sent telegraphic instructions to inform the Rumanian Government of this.<sup>4</sup> The petroleum deliveries supplied in return (about 400,000 tons to the value of 30 million RM by January 1940), which are extremely important to us, are thereby assured.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 703.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 656.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 632 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 742.

III. *Italy*

The Foreign Ministry has informed the Italian Ambassador, and Colonel General Milch has informed the Italian Air Attaché,<sup>5</sup> that we are willing to deliver to Italy either the 7.5 cm anti-aircraft guns made by Skoda and originally destined for Yugoslavia, or even the 8.8 cm German anti-aircraft guns made by Rheinmetall, though the latter would need longer delivery periods. We are now awaiting the reply of the Italian Government as to which of the two offers they prefer.

The offer to Italy of the anti-aircraft guns originally destined for Yugoslavia was made on special instructions from the Führer.

IV. *Yugoslavia*

The Yugoslav Air Attaché<sup>6</sup> has been informed that the questions as to whether, and to what extent, we can effect the aircraft deliveries under the Credit Agreement signed in Belgrade on July 5,<sup>7</sup> and whether the anti-aircraft guns ordered from Skoda can be supplied, must first be re-examined in the light of Germany's own requirements. The German Legation in Belgrade has been informed accordingly by telegram.<sup>8</sup>

If the Italians decide to buy the Skoda anti-aircraft guns originally destined for the Yugoslavs, considerable ill-feeling will undoubtedly result in Yugoslavia. It will also be very difficult to cut down to any great degree the supplies of aircraft already promised earlier to Yugoslavia, now that the Credit Agreement of July 5 has been signed. Field Marshal Göring will first re-examine the question from the military aspect. As soon as the Field Marshal's opinion has been communicated to the Foreign Ministry it will have to be decided what final decision will have to be taken from the political point of view.

To the State Secretary for submission to the Reich Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

<sup>5</sup> General Aurelio Liotta.

<sup>6</sup> Colonel V. Vauhnik.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 620.

<sup>8</sup> In telegram No. 192 of July 30 (not printed, 5570/E398969).

## No. 739

2134/467413

*Ambassador Atolico to State Secretary Weizsäcker*

BERLIN, July 29, 1939.

MY DEAR WEIZSÄCKER: I have spoken to H.E. Ciano by telephone concerning the reply to be made to Hungary,<sup>1</sup> and this at the request of H.E. Ribbentrop<sup>2</sup> who had asked me to find out what the Italian views were.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the two letters from Count Teleki, see document No. 712, enclosures 1 and 2.

<sup>2</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 715.

H.E. Ciano considers it necessary for the two Governments to act in full accord in this matter. Of the two alternatives of which I informed him and which had been explained to me by H.E. Ribbentrop, that is, 1) the possibility of an immediate reply<sup>3</sup> in the sense indicated to me yesterday on broad lines and 2) the other alternative of holding over the reply until H.E. Ribbentrop has had his meeting with Csáky, he would prefer the second.

H.E. Ciano, in any case, informed me that he had already seen the Hungarian Minister in Rome, Villani, and told him orally that the second letter had produced a *disastrous* impression in Italy<sup>4</sup> and that, as far as the first letter was concerned, this could only be regarded as a pretext for the second.

Concerning the question raised in the first letter (Hungary's admission to the Italian-German military talks) H.E. Ciano considers it advisable, at least for the moment, to avoid any reply whatsoever to this.<sup>5</sup>

With kindest regards,

ATTOLICO

<sup>3</sup> An undated document found in the files of the Bureau of the State Secretary (73/51951) and headed "Führer to Horthy . . ." appears to be an incomplete draft of the reply referred to here. It reads: "The Hungarian Minister President has informed me officially that in so far as the present circumstances undergo no serious change, Hungary could not, on moral grounds, undertake any armed action against Poland.

"I have not brought up for discussion with the Hungarian Government the event of an armed conflict between Germany and Poland, which, as is well known, I am not seeking, but trying to avoid. Should it be a case of a localized German-Polish clash the question of armed action by Hungary would not arise. Should there, however, be a general European conflict in which Germany and Poland will cross swords, I am surely not mistaken in assuming that the Kingdom of Hungary must take up her position where she must stand in the spirit of German-Hungarian tradition, on moral grounds and in view of her considered interests in following the path of her resurgence and where she has stood in recent decades."

<sup>4</sup> In a minute of Aug. 5 (not printed, 73/51969) Woermann recorded that Sztójay had referred to the two letters (see footnote 1) and had hinted that the second had met with a more favourable reception in Italy than in Germany. In a memorandum of Aug. 5, St. S. No. 614 (not printed, 73/51970), Weizsäcker recorded that Attolico whom he had informed of this remark had denied it. See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. xii, No. 786.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal notes in Weizsäcker's handwriting: (i) "Foreign Minister has seen. W[eizsäcker] 29/7." (ii) "Acknowledge. Let Csáky come [see documents Nos. 717, footnote 2, and 784]." (iii) "What do you think? Not asked. Non-existent [cf. draft reply cited in footnote 4]."

## No. 740

2814/548642-43

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 389 of July 29

PARIS, July 30, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 30—6:45 p.m.

Pol. II 2720.

The Council of Ministers held today under the chairmanship of the President of the Republic approved a large number of emergency decrees, representing extensive legislation in the administrative, economic,

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

financial, and military spheres. All the measures have been decisively influenced by the tension in foreign affairs, as can be seen from the emergency decrees for countering espionage and for the military strengthening of France, and above all from the fact that the use of special powers to carry through such comprehensive measures can only be justified by tension in foreign politics.

The most important measures refer to:

1) Prolongation by two years of the legislative period of the Chamber, which in the normal way would end on May 31, 1940. This step avoids an election campaign, which would have come at the latest in the spring of 1940, and the effects of which seem to the French Government undesirable in view of the tension in foreign politics. (See despatch of June 17, A 2579.<sup>2</sup>)

2) Amalgamation of French radio services which are placed directly under the Minister President. The Director General to be appointed is Brillouin, Professor of Physics at the Collège de la France [*sic*], who has hardly ever appeared previously in public life, and who recently paid a fact-finding visit to the United States.

3) Establishment of a Commissariat-General for Information in the "Présidence du Conseil", under the direction of the author Jean Giraudoux, who has been in the French diplomatic service since 1912, was for many years director of *Oeuvres françaises à l'étranger*, serving under Berthelot<sup>3</sup> as Press Director, and has latterly been Inspector of Diplomatic and Consular Posts with the rank of Minister. About 1924 he was attached for some time to the French Embassy in Berlin. He too has recently paid a propaganda and fact-finding visit to the United States.

4) Codification measures in the interests of national defence.

5) Intensification of the counter-espionage services.

6) Family legislation. The new *Code de la Famille*, which is to comprise 170 articles, aims at raising the birth-rate by practical measures and moral help.

7) Reorganization of the Wheat Office.

Further decrees in respect of economic and fiscal measures, provision of credits, carrying out of public works, limitation of profits in the armaments industry etc.

Besides the prolongation of the legislative period, the establishment of the Commissariat General for Information, corresponding roughly to the Ministry of Propaganda, and the placing of this and the radio services under the Minister President deserve the greatest attention.

The texts of the various decrees will be submitted after publication in the *Journal Officiel*. Detailed assessment of and reports about the various decrees may be made later.

WELCZECK

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8475/E596608-10).

<sup>3</sup> Philippe Berthelot, at that time Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry.



## No. 741

7891/E571510

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 390 of July 30

PARIS, July 30, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received July 30—6:45 p.m.

Pol. II 2716.

With reference to my telegram No. 385 of July 28.<sup>2</sup>

Active preparations are continuing here for sending French and British military delegations to Moscow. Yesterday Bonnet received General Doumenc, who is to lead the French delegation, for a prolonged talk. Both the French and British delegations are said to be composed of representatives of the three Services. The British delegation is supposed to arrive in Paris next week and travel to Moscow with the French delegation.

The impression, reported in my preceding telegram, is growing that military talks here and probably also in London are being used as a last means of preventing the adjournment of the Moscow negotiations and of forcing a result. Russian agreement appears to have been taken for granted on the basis of British proposals made at an earlier stage of the negotiations, whereas the present Russian attitude towards the despatch of the delegations does not so far appear to be known.

WELCZECK

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<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 731.

## No. 742

5555/E305401

*The Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department to  
the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 283

BERLIN, July 30, 1939—12:45 p.m.

1236 g.

The Air Ministry have finally approved the agreement of July 8 for the supply of aircraft material,<sup>1</sup> which was concluded subject to their consent. Please inform Teodorescu<sup>2</sup> and Bujoiu of this. At the same time please arrange with Bujoiu for the deliveries of petroleum to be

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 632 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> General Paul Teodorescu, Minister of Air and Marine.

got under way. It is alleged that tankers have been held back in Rumania during the last few days. This matter is very urgent.<sup>3</sup>

Report by telegram.<sup>4</sup>

CLODIUS

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Discussed with H[err] Müller [Air Ministry] and H[err] Gramsch [Office of the Four Year Plan]. Cl[odius] 29/7."

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 320 of Aug. 1 (not printed, 5556/E395405) Stelzer replied that oil deliveries had been in progress since July 21, and that the tankers had been released a week ago.

## No. 743

259/169728

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, July 31, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

No. 286 of July 31

Büro RAM No.....

For the Ambassador personally.

Please report immediately by telegram on the substance of the political conversations which Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat had on the occasion of his last visit to London, in particular report on Wohlthat's conversation with you, as he states that he conducted the political conversations in agreement with the Ambassador. [Also report why I have so far not been informed of these conversations by the Embassy.]<sup>2</sup>

RIBBENTROP<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch and of receipt is not shown on this copy. The text printed in the *Dirksen Papers* (Moscow), No. 17, gives these as 1:18 p.m. and 2:10 p.m. respectively.

<sup>2</sup> The sentence in square brackets has been deleted in the draft and a marginal note written against it, which reads: "Minute: Final sentence omitted provisionally in view of Dirksen's report of July 24 [document No. 710]. For report, see enclosure. Sgd. W[eizsäcker]."

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Telephoned from Bayreuth. To be despatched at once!"

## No. 744

8515/E597405

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, July 31, 1939—1:22 p.m.

SECRET

Received July 31—6:10 p.m.

No. 161 of July 31

With reference to our despatch of July 29, arriving in Moscow by courier today.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 736.

For the Ambassador.

Please report by telegram the date and time of your next interview with Molotov as soon as it is fixed. With regard to arranging this interview, the instructions in telegram No. 152 of July 22<sup>2</sup> apply.

Therefore the instructions contained in our despatch of July 29 should not to be mentioned as a reason, but you should refer to such other matters as may appear to you appropriate as the reasons for arranging an interview.

We are anxious, however, for an early interview.<sup>3</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 700.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 151 of Aug. 1 (not printed, 34/23230) Schulenburg replied that he had been so far unable to obtain an interview with Molotov owing to the opening of the Agricultural Exhibition that day. In telegram No. 155 of Aug. 2 (not printed, 695/260370) Schulenburg reported that he had arranged an interview with Molotov for Aug. 3, but the exact time had not yet been fixed.

## No. 745

8418/E592821

### *The Legation in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 221 of July 31

BELGRADE, July 31, 1939—8:00 p.m.

Received August 1—3:10 a.m.

Pol. I Vbd. 338.

With reference to your telegram No. 191 of July 29.<sup>1</sup>

Instructions carried out today with Cincar-Marković, who has been absent from Belgrade.

He replied that Yugoslavia had already broken away from the League of Nations in spirit, but was waiting for a formal pretext for withdrawing. He expected this during the September meeting in Geneva, where Czechoslovakia and Albania would be discussed. If Britain and France then tried to insist on a policy hostile to the Axis, there would no longer be room for Yugoslavia in the League of Nations, and she would announce her withdrawal. Before that, however, he saw no possibility of doing so.

Cincar-Marković added he had assumed that this policy was in accordance with Germany's desires. In conclusion he mentioned that he expected to be in Bled again at the end of this week when the Prince Regent returned there from London,<sup>2</sup> and he would again discuss the matter there with Minister von Heeren.

FEINE<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 733.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 680.

<sup>3</sup> Counsellor at the Belgrade Legation.

## No. 746

259/169721-22

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

MOST URGENT

LONDON, July 31, 1939—8:50 p.m.

No. 277 of July 31

Received July 31—11:00 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 286 of July 31.<sup>2</sup>

For the Reich Minister personally.

1) During his stay here Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat was invited to a discussion by both Sir Horace Wilson and the Secretary to the Department of Overseas Trade, Hudson. On my advice Herr Wohlthat acceded to this request and informed me orally of the substance of the conversations. I reported by telegram on his visit here (cf. my telegram No. 263 of July 22)<sup>3</sup> and submitted a despatch on his conversations with Wilson (A. 2974 of July 24).<sup>4</sup>

2) In my conversations with Wohlthat we discussed in particular the extent to which the information imparted by Wilson tallied with the trend towards a constructive policy observed by me in Government circles here (cf. despatches A. 2492 of June 24 and A. 2718 of July 10).<sup>5</sup> Here we were able to establish that the general tendencies observed so far had become crystallized in a plan, based predominantly on economic policy, which had been worked out, or at least approved, by Chamberlain.

3) The initiative taken by Wilson and Hudson is, as summarizing my reports I should like to repeat, to be attributed to the following views which are establishing themselves in authoritative circles:<sup>6</sup>

a) that German-British . . . . .<sup>7</sup> are drifting towards war unless an attempt is made to smooth out mutual relations.

b) that the British encirclement policy is a menace to peace and entails considerable risks for Britain.

c) that the state of British rearmament makes it possible for the Government to seek a settlement with Germany without being suspected of weakness.

4) Wilson's desire to expound to Wohlthat his ideas, primarily

<sup>1</sup> A draft of this telegram is contained in the *Dirksen Papers* (Moscow), No. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 743.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 698.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 710.

<sup>5</sup> Documents Nos. 564 and 645.

<sup>6</sup> In the Dirksen draft (see footnote above) this passage reads: "to the following views, which predominate here".

<sup>7</sup> A typewritten marginal note here reads: "'Relations' apparently omitted". The Dirksen draft has "tension" as the missing word.

governed. . . . . ("by" apparently omitted)<sup>8</sup> economic considerations, is to be attributed to the fact that Wilson, the "Chief Economic Adviser" to the British Government, regarded Wohlthat, the Commissioner [sic]<sup>9</sup> for the Four Year Plan, as the appropriate expert. Wohlthat adopted a purely receptive attitude during the conversations,<sup>10</sup> as also emerges from the fact that he flatly refused Wilson's offer to have the ideas that had been put forward confirmed by a political authority (Prime Minister Chamberlain himself), on the grounds that he did not feel it was within his province.

DIRKSEN<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The words in round brackets have evidently been inserted during deciphering. The Dirksen draft here reads: "primarily governed by considerations of economic policy".

<sup>9</sup> In the Dirksen draft this word has been amended in pencil from "economic adviser".  
<sup>10</sup> The Dirksen draft here reads: "Wohlthat, as a newspaper here put it, conducted himself as a polite listener".

<sup>11</sup> The *Dirksen Papers* (Moscow) contain, as No. 13, a memorandum by Dirksen dated July 21, recording what Wohlthat had told him of his conversations with Sir H. Wilson and Mr. Hudson. No copy has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.

## No. 747

610/248233

### *The Minister in Slovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 159 of July 31

BRATISLAVA, July 31, 1939—9:40 p.m.

Received August 1—12:20 a.m.

With reference to my despatch No. M gen. 463 of July 25.<sup>1</sup>

Negotiations on the treaty on the Zone of Protection have now been concluded.<sup>2</sup> Some of the proposed Slovak amendments require your approval and the consent of the High Command of the Wehrmacht. As to the war-time strength we permit the Slovak army, the final attitude of the Slovak Government will be given in the conversation which General Barckhausen will have with Minister President Tiso, who is now on holiday, on August 2 at Topolčany. Foreign Minister Ďurčanský said in today's session that he could not . . . (group missing) the German war-time strength to 75,000 men.

General Barckhausen will arrive in Berlin with Counsellor Hofmann,<sup>3</sup> probably on Thursday, August 3.

BERNARD

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 611, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> Counsellor at the German Legation in Slovakia.

## No. 748

259/169724

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. 289

BERLIN, July 31, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to my telegram No. 286.<sup>2</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

On his return to Berlin, Wohlthat made a report on his conversation with Sir Horace Wilson,<sup>3</sup> which has reached the Foreign Minister through Field Marshal Göring. This report contains Wilson's suggestions for comprehensive German-British cooperation and agreements in political, military and economic respects. These suggestions appear to be regarded on the British side as an official feeler. Wohlthat did not apparently put the obvious question to Wilson, whether the suggestions presuppose the simultaneous abandonment of the encirclement negotiations, in particular with Moscow. The Foreign Minister requests, as already stated in the preceding telegram, a report by telegram on the substance of Wohlthat's conversations, as well as on your attitude to them.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch and of receipt is not shown on this copy. The text printed in the *Dirksen Papers* (Moscow), No. 19, gives these as 10:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. respectively.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 743.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 716.

## No. 749

7693/E543463-65

*The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 1331

DANZIG, July 31, 1939.

Received August 1.

Pol. V 7191.

Subject: Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig.

With reference to my report of July 22, 1939, No. 1283.<sup>1</sup>

To the Polish Note of June 10, 1939, (enclosure to report No. 977 of June 12, 1939),<sup>2</sup> and to the further Polish Note of July 19, 1939<sup>3</sup> (enclosure to my previous report under reference) regarding the activities of the Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig, the Senate of the Free City of Danzig has set out in detail in two Notes their views on this matter. I have the honour to transmit copies of the two Danzig Notes of July 29.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 702.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 515 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 702 and footnote 2 thereto.

In their first Note<sup>4</sup> the Senate again list those cases in which Polish Customs Inspectors have committed acts of espionage etc.; singled out from recent incidents are the murder in Kalthof,<sup>5</sup> in which the Polish Customs Inspector Swida took part, further the espionage activities of the Polish Customs Inspector Kalinowski at the ferry in Schiewenhorst (see report of June 9, 1939, No. 959),<sup>6</sup> and the case of the Polish Customs Inspector Lipinski (see report of June 12, 1939, No. 976)<sup>7</sup> who will probably have to stand his trial in mid-August. The Danzig Note then contradicts the Polish view that the number of Polish Customs Inspectors is still insufficient. In this respect, detailed statistics are used to show that neither the volume of trade passing through the port of Danzig, nor the frontier passenger traffic across the East Prussian border, nor the organization of the Danzig Customs Authority and the number of Danzig Customs officials, can in any way warrant an increase in the number of Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig. The Senate of the Free City of Danzig declare that they can, in future, no longer treat as Polish Customs Inspectors the Polish frontier officials assigned for some considerable time now to the Polish Customs Inspectors. With regard to the actual extent of the rights of the Polish Customs Inspectors, the Danzig Note, quoting the relevant treaty provisions, makes it clear that the Polish Customs Inspectors are by no means entitled to apply without restriction special supervisory measures even outside the Danzig Customs Posts, but are merely authorized to exercise a general supervision within the Customs posts, which authorization has never been disputed on the part of Danzig. In conclusion it is pointed out that the Polish reservations regarding the oath taken by the Danzig Customs officials to the National Socialist leadership of the State are inadmissible interference in the domestic affairs of the Free City.

The second Danzig Note<sup>8</sup> deals with the Polish threat to discontinue from August 1, 1939, the customs supervision of the Danzig firm "Amada-Unida" by Polish Customs officials and no longer to recognize the requisite Danzig certificates for consignments from this firm to Poland. Such a measure would, the Danzig Note asserts, be inadmissible *action directe* and would compel the Senate of the Free City of Danzig to apply economic reprisals. The Danzig Note mentions, in this connection, a recent Polish embargo on the import of Danzig catches of herrings into Poland, which is also designated as inadmissible.<sup>9</sup>

JANSON

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (7693/E548466-71).

<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 416, 417 and 418.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (7693/E548428-30).

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 652 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>8</sup> Not printed (7693/E548472-73).

<sup>9</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Nos. 503 and 523, and the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 175 and 178.

## No. 750

1625/339151

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 1383

WASHINGTON, July 31, 1939.

Received August 9.

Pol. II 2849.

With reference to your despatch Pol. II 83<sup>1</sup> of June 11 and my telegram No. 241 of July 26.<sup>2</sup>

As I stated in the telegram under reference, in the opinion of well-informed representatives of the press, the State Department no longer believes in Stalin's willingness to undertake far-reaching commitments in a triple alliance with London and Paris. I also learn from a well-informed source that this prospect fills President Roosevelt with anxiety, and that he would therefore like to exert his influence towards promoting the conclusion of the triple alliance. Though the American Government have perhaps taken no official steps with the Soviet Government in this respect, the President has expressed his hope and wishes, both during the farewell visit of the Russian Ambassador here, Oumansky, who is at present on leave in Moscow, and during that of the new American Ambassador to Moscow, Steinhardt, that the pact negotiations may be brought to a successful conclusion. I assume that Ambassador Steinhardt, who is said to enjoy the special confidence of the President, has also received special instructions on the subject. President Roosevelt is even alleged to be inclined towards financial aid to Russia.

THOMSEN

<sup>1</sup> A pencil note against this reference reads: "Wrong". Possibly reference was intended to Pol. II 2083, under which despatch from London A 2250 of June 10 was circulated (not printed, 1408/361264-69 and 8476/E596615).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 725.

## No. 751

452/223403-09

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

A 2964

LONDON, July 31, 1939.

Received [August 1].<sup>1</sup>

Kult. Spez. 556.

With reference to your telegram No. 267 of July 22.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The date of receipt is taken from the departmental register.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.



Subject: Enlightenment of British public opinion on problems of German foreign policy, in particular the Danzig question.

I. Prerequisites for any propaganda activity.

II. Suggestions as to methods of enlightenment:

- a) Material for articles,
- b) "Letters to the Editor",<sup>3</sup>
- c) Distribution of pamphlets, etc.
- d) Polish statements,
- e) Miscellaneous.

III. The activities of the Embassy hitherto:

- a) "Letters to the Editor",
- b) Lectures by non-German agents,
- c) Arrangements for conversations and lectures by a Danzig personage,
- d) Exploitation of reports from German authorities in Poland,
- e) Exploitation of the Führer's speech of April 28,
- f) Articles as briefs [*Richtungsartikel*] for the German and British press.

## I

In the shaping of publicity relations between two countries the following alternatives arise: either to meet every attack or slander with an appropriately strong reply on the principle of meeting rudeness with rudeness, in which case hope must be abandoned of arousing understanding in the press of the other country for one's own political ideas and aims and their dissemination. Or to abandon the idea of paying back in the same coin every press attack from the opposite side and rather to concentrate on infiltrating the other country's press and public opinion with one's own political arguments. A combination of *both* alternatives, i.e., to wage a press campaign *and* at the same time obtain a hearing and circulation in the press is, in practice, impossible.

The foregoing general remarks are of importance especially in view of the present state of German-British publicity relations and our desire for understanding for our intentions and aims among the British public. For, in any effort to enlighten British public opinion on our problems, especially on Danzig, the Eastern question, and the colonies, it is an indispensable prerequisite that anti-British propaganda in the German press, radio and through other channels be modified so as to create a calmer atmosphere. It is impossible to canvass for understanding of the German standpoint on the Danzig question with any hope of success as long as the King and Queen, the British army, and British institutions are sharply attacked or ridiculed by our propaganda,

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

or when British public opinion is incessantly and increasingly annoyed and incensed by mass distribution of bad translations of German press articles which strike the British mentality as offensive.

If this prerequisite be met the methods best suited for active enlightenment can be considered.

## II

a) The main factors which hinder the placing in newspapers here, even in those of the right-wing opposition, of the undoubtedly not unimportant material so far sent for the information of the Embassy, have already been given in despatch No. A 2925 of July 21.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore it must be pointed out that the British newspapers—at least those of any standing—do not, in principle, publish any article received from outside, but only those contributed by their own staffs. Material supplied by the Embassy could therefore at best get into print after editorial revision as the work of the paper concerned. Here and there it will perhaps also be possible to get suitable material (such as is described in the report under reference) printed *verbatim*. As a rule, however, even this can only serve for information and towards forming the opinion of certain editors.

For the rest, good translations of some articles in the *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz*, whose tone is generally in keeping with British mentality, would be suitable for distribution in the United Kingdom. Were it possible, when occasion arises, to have several copies of translations available here on the day before publication in Germany, the prospects of publication in the British press as well would be greatly improved.

b) Moreover the "Letters to the Editor" are and will continue to be one of the best means of enlightenment. Attention was drawn to this under 3b of the annex sent with despatch A 2725 of July 8.<sup>2</sup> As mentioned there, letters of this kind could be written from England as well as from Germany. As a matter of organization it would, however, seem expedient for two or three experienced writers in Germany to devote themselves exclusively, after perusing the fifteen to twenty influential newspapers and weeklies appearing in the United Kingdom, to composing letters in reply to the arguments contained in leading articles or in "Letters to the Editor". If these "Letters to the Editor" are to the point, in fairly good English, and are free from spiteful polemics, they stand a good chance of publication. Even if this should not happen in one case or another, they contribute towards the formation of editorial opinion.

Apart from this organized replying from Germany, the Embassy would continue to have letters written from here independently.

c) The distribution of suitably presented pamphlets in English is effective. I draw attention here to paragraph 2 of the annex to my

report of July 8, No. 2725. The reaction so far observed to the pamphlet by Herr Fuchs, distributed from Danzig,<sup>4</sup> is very gratifying. I reserve a further report on the subject.

Success can be predicted for the collection of British opinions and their circulation in book form planned by Frau Margarete Gärtner. The same applies to the plan for a new edition of Dawson's book<sup>5</sup> as well as to the article published by Dawson in 1931, in the *Nineteenth Century* (December number).<sup>6</sup>

d) Finally the request is again repeated that the Embassy be kept informed of aggressive statements by Polish politicians, with exact data as to source. Statements of this kind are suppressed by the press here. The Embassy would have opportunities to exploit them.

e) Further suggestions are to be found under section III f).

### III

a) Despite the extremely difficult circumstances attendant on any enlightenment activity, to which attention has been drawn under section I, the Embassy can register certain successes with its efforts at enlightenment. I refer to the letter by Sir Arnold Wilson, inspired here and published in *The Times* of July 7, 1939, on his impressions during his recent visit to Danzig, and to the letter by Professor Haferkorn published in *The Times* of the 28th instant, which was likewise composed in consultation with the Embassy. Other such letters are being circulated. Among others Sir Raymond Beazley, the historian, advised by the Embassy, is continually sending letters to influential provincial papers.

b) W. von Korostovetz, the Ukrainian, who, as reported elsewhere, has excellent connections especially in Conservative circles, has been induced to deal exhaustively with the Danzig question in addressing Conservative party gatherings in London and the provinces. Herr von Korostovetz informs us that his speeches on this subject arouse general interest.

c) In addition the Embassy is, of course, ceaselessly at pains in conversations and at small gatherings to bring influence to bear on influential personages and to persuade them in turn to undertake a certain amount of propagandist activity. Such discussions about the Danzig question take place daily. In this connection attention is directed to Professor Haferkorn's efforts. He has been here for some three weeks and, through the Embassy, has been put in touch with influential people, among others Lords Arnold, Brocket, Queenborough,

<sup>4</sup> In July 1939 copies of a pamphlet edited by Dr. Karl Hans Fuchs entitled *Danzig—what is it all about?* were sent to a number of British subjects. The pamphlet, which contained essays by six Danzigers, was the subject of correspondence in *The Times*.

<sup>5</sup> Presumably refers to William Harbutt Dawson: *Germany under the Treaty* (London, 1933).

<sup>6</sup> *Germany and the Corridor in The Nineteenth Century and After*, vol. 110, pp. 671-684.

Noel-Buxton, the Duke of Buccleuch, Geoffrey Dawson, Editor of *The Times*, and his colleagues Deakin and Kennedy, General Ismay, Secretary to the Committee for Imperial Defence, General Sir Wyndham Childs, and the Members of Parliament Sir Thomas Moore, Sir Arnold Wilson, V. Cazalet and numerous others. Haferkorn defended the Danzig standpoint with skill, and, as could be observed, has done good work of enlightenment.

It would be welcome if other suitable personages, where possible citizens of the Free City of Danzig, could also be sent here for the same purpose.

d) The reports currently furnished to the Embassy on the treatment of the German minority in Poland, in particular the material sent with despatch of May 11, 1939—Pol. V 3303<sup>7</sup>—the latter in an English translation made here—have even been submitted to a high-level Government office.

e) As regards the use made of the Führer's speech of April 28, 1939,<sup>8</sup> attention is drawn to the report of April 29—No. A 1687.<sup>9</sup>

f) Enclosed I submit an article<sup>10</sup> by Dr. Hesse, Press Adviser to the Embassy, which deals with the usual arguments employed here on the Danzig question. It has been generally observed that Polish propaganda in England uses the following three main themes:

Through the reunion of Danzig with the Reich,

- 1) the political independence of Poland would be threatened;
- 2) the strategic situation would be fundamentally shifted to Poland's disadvantage;
- 3) the economic independence of Poland would be rendered doubtful.

The enclosed article replies to these arguments in a manner suited to the British mentality. It would help the work of the Embassy if this article were given the widest publicity in Germany under the name of an influential personage. If necessary, the Embassy would ask to be supplied with 500 copies in English the day before publication in Germany. If it should appear under the name of the Foreign Minister the widest publicity could be predicted for the article in the United Kingdom.

VON DIRKSEN

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 367.

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 355.

<sup>9</sup> Not found.

<sup>10</sup> Not found.

## No. 752

259/169730-31

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 278 of August 1

LONDON, August 1, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received August 2—12:15 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 286 of July 31.<sup>2</sup>

For the State Secretary personally.

1) As regards the Wohlthat/Sir Horace Wilson conversation and my attitude towards it, I refer you to my telegram No. 277 of July 31.<sup>3</sup> The fact that during the conversation Wohlthat did not expressly raise the question of the abandonment of the encirclement policy is to be attributed to the agreement he had with me that he should, in general, confine himself to a purely receptive attitude.

2) Although the conversation did not go deeply into political matters I have the impression that it was intended, *via* questions of economic policy, to suggest a comprehensive constructive programme. I described the difficulties the British Government would have to face in carrying out this programme, in view of the present mood of public opinion, in my report of July 24, No. A 2974.<sup>4</sup>

3) That a settlement with Germany would not be compatible with the simultaneous prosecution of an encirclement policy is clear to leading personalities here. The determining considerations in such respect are roughly as follows:

a) A settlement with Germany would chemically dissolve [*chemisch auflösen*] the Danzig problem, so to speak, and would clear the way for a German-Polish arrangement in which Britain would no longer need to be interested.

b) The progress of the pact negotiations with Russia is regarded sceptically, in spite of, or just because of, the despatch of a Military Mission. This is borne out by the composition of the British Military Mission:<sup>5</sup> the Admiral, formerly Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth [*sic*], is practically on the retired list and was never on the Naval Staff, the General is also purely a combatant officer; the Air Marshal is outstanding as a pilot and an instructor, but not as a strategist. This seems to indicate that the task of the Military Mission is rather to

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 743.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 746.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 710.

<sup>5</sup> The British Mission consisted of Admiral Sir Reginald Plunkett-Erle-Drax, who had been Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth, 1935-1938, Air Marshal Sir Charles Burnett and Major-General Heywood.

ascertain the fighting value of the Soviet press [*sic*] than to conclude agreements on operations.

A high-ranking officer in the Air Ministry recently remarked to the Air Attaché that he was convinced that neither the British nor the Russians had any serious desire to conclude an agreement.

c) As to what is thought of the military value of Poland, doubts also prevail which find expression in reserve about financial questions. General Ironside's<sup>6</sup> report is also said not to have been any too favourable.

d) Rheden [*sic*] Buxton<sup>7</sup> (brother of Lord Noel-Buxton), a politician who enjoys the best connections and belongs to the Labour Party, approved, in a conversation with the Counsellor of Embassy, ideas similar to those of Wilson's, and described the abandonment of the policy of encirclement as a natural result of settlement with Germany. A memorandum on the conversation with Buxton follows by the same air mail.<sup>8</sup>

3[4] There is a mounting feeling that the possibilities of an agreement in principle with Germany ought to be ascertained within the next few weeks, in order to be clear about a slogan for the elections (see report of June [*sic*-July] 24, A 2974). It is hoped that the period of political calm, which is expected to set in with the recess, will create the conditions for drawing up a programme of negotiations which would have some prospects of bearing fruit.

DIRKSEN

<sup>6</sup> General Sir Edmund Ironside had been sent to Warsaw on July 17 and had returned on July 21.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Roden Buxton, former Labour Member of Parliament.

<sup>8</sup> No copy of this has been found in the Foreign Ministry files, but see the *Dirksen Papers* (Moscow), No. 22.

## No. 753

259/169732

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 279 of August 1

LONDON, August 1, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Received August 2—12:15 p.m.

The Wehrmacht Attachés are agreed in observing a surprising scepticism in British military circles about the forthcoming talks with the Soviet Armed Forces. It is impossible to brush aside the impression that, on the British side, the talks are being conducted mainly to obtain for once a picture of the real fighting strength of the Soviet Army.

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

The little material so far available to the British makes it, in any case, appear possible that the report by the Military Delegation going to Moscow will turn out to be a negative one.

This impression is strengthened by the composition of the British Military Delegation which has been announced today.<sup>2</sup> None of the three representatives of the Services has had a training which specially qualifies him to negotiate on operational measures. All three gentlemen, however, are combatant officers, who consequently have a particularly well-trained eye for the fighting value of a unit and its equipment with effective military material.

DIRKSEN

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 752, footnote 5.

## No. 754

2102/455285-301

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P 24

WARSAW, August 1, 1939.

Received August 2.

Pol. V 7270.

## POLITICAL REPORT

With reference to your despatch of July 26.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: State of Poland's moral and material powers of resistance.

I. The will to resist of the population in the solidly Polish areas [*Kerngebieten*].

a) Social and political structure of the Polish population.

1). Intelligentsia.

2). Rural population.

3). Workers.

4). Jewish middle-class stratum.

b) Polish propaganda.

1). Press and radio.

2). The Polish clergy.

c) Morale of the people.

II. The situation in the Polish frontier areas.

a) In Upper Silesia.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2842/549473). In this despatch Woermann referred to a report of July 18 from the Consulate General at Poznań (not printed, 2842/549471-72) and asked the Warsaw Embassy for their views on the morale of the Polish population in general. In particular, he requested the Embassy's observations as to whether (as stated in the Poznań report) the longer the present situation continued the more the moral and material powers of resistance of the Poles would decline. As appears from a letter by Moltke to Schliep of July 25 (not printed, 2842/549474-75), the former had already made a circular enquiry to all his Consulates about morale in Poland following a telephone discussion with the latter on the Poznań report.

- b) In the Olza area.
- c) In Poznań.
- d) In Pommerellen.
- e) In the Cracow area.
- f) In the Lwów district.

III. Powers of economic resistance.

IV. Conclusions.

As the report of the Consulate General at Poznań of July 18, No. 1445,<sup>2</sup> contained observations on the decline in morale and the deterioration of the will to resist of the Polish people, which do not agree with observations made here, I have requested, from all Consulates General and Consulates in Poland, reports on the situation in their respective Consular districts. These reports confirm that the observations of the Consulate General at Poznań obviously apply only to a limited frontier district, and cannot be generalized. In the following observations, which are intended to give an overall picture of the morale of the Polish people, the reports of the Consulates, as well as replies to questions addressed to all informants of the Embassy who are known to be sober judges of the situation, have been used.

*I. The will to resist of people in the solidly Polish areas*

The morale and will to resist of the people in the solidly Polish areas are of special importance for Poland's attitude as a whole. Here, the population has now endured for four months a continuous state of partial mobilization and political uncertainty without breaking down or displaying any weakening of morale, let alone the appearance of defeatist tendencies. The old hatred of everything German and the conviction that it is Poland's destiny to cross swords with Germany are too deeply rooted to allow passions, once inflamed, to die away so soon. Thus it is easy for the Government to obtain the desired effect with their nationalist slogans, and almost everywhere their propaganda falls on fertile ground.

In order to study the question of how it is possible to achieve such unanimity it is important to bear in mind the special structure of the Polish population.

*a) Social and political structure of the Polish population*

*Intelligentsia:* The Polish intelligentsia did not emerge from a well-to-do bourgeoisie, but emanated for the most part from socially uprooted sections of the population which, before and during the World War, carried on the revolutionary struggle against the so-called Partitioning Powers. This Polish intelligentsia governs the State today, its only basis of existence is in government service. It is, therefore, as is perhaps no intelligentsia in other countries, bound up for better or for worse

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1.



with the State system. It considers itself the chief exponent of the concept of Polish nationalism and of a Polish State, and, as a result of its national revolutionary tradition, is imbued with a national fanaticism not so easily to be shaken by antagonistic propaganda.

The owners of large landed estates and the upper bourgeoisie are too insignificant in numbers to play a decisive part within this intellectual stratum in influencing this spirit of resistance. Even if these very classes, through concern over preserving their possessions, may perhaps now and then incline to a more realistic view, nevertheless the majority of them do not lag far behind the other sections of the intelligentsia in their dislike of Germany, if only on account of their strong ties with French culture.

*Rural population:* Far the largest place in the Polish population, with some 70 per cent of the total, is occupied by the peasant element. The broad mass of the rural population of Poland is dull and ignorant, partly illiterate, and can be easily swayed by any Government which appeals to them with plain and clear national slogans. The most influential people in the villages, the priests and teachers, enjoy boundless trust and are at present almost entirely in the service of Government propaganda. They are the tools by means of which the politically shapeless mass of the villagers is led and influenced. Even the more advanced stratum of the peasant population is in the anti-German camp and under the influence of the democratic Peasant People's Party, which has always supported a Polish foreign policy directed against Germany.

*Working classes:* The Polish working people, who live in very depressed social conditions, are overwhelmingly Marxist and are, if only for this reason, hostile to Germany and German National Socialism. Their political organization—the P.P.S.,<sup>3</sup>—from which Pilsudski also graduated, has, moreover, old traditions from the national war of liberation which make it easier for them to cooperate with the bourgeois nationalists in the fight against Germany.

*Jewish middle-class stratum:* Alongside the peasantry and the workers, an important part is played in almost all Central and Western European countries by a numerically very strong lower middle-class, often inclined to nervousness and affording a good breeding-ground for rumours and sometimes also for defeatist tendencies. In Poland such a lower middle-class stratum hardly exists; its place is taken by a strong Jewish middle-class stratum, lacking in national consciousness, and therefore afflicted by all these lower middle-class vices to a much larger extent. But, given the special circumstances, the Jewish population of Poland (about 3½ million), is, as far as the struggle against Germany is concerned, a natural and fanatical ally of Polish chauvinism. No

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<sup>3</sup> Polska Partia Socjalistyczna, the Polish Socialist Party.

further Government propaganda is needed to keep alive the hatred against Germany of this Jewish stratum and to preserve it from a mood of capitulation.

b) *Polish Propaganda*

1) *Press and Radio*: Propaganda working under specifically Polish conditions naturally cannot only make use of the methods applied by propaganda in more highly civilized countries. Press and radio are used to their fullest extent and serve the aims of propaganda, but play no decisive part in Central Poland. The population of the large towns there can be influenced by such means, but not in the countryside where for the most part newspapers are neither read nor the radio listened to. It must be remembered that in all Poland there are at present only about 920,000 wireless licence holders, of whom again only about 580,000 have valve radio sets. Of these, too, only a fraction are suitable for receiving foreign stations, quite apart from the fact that the majority of them are concentrated in the western part of the country and in the few large towns, while the Polish village listens—if at all—at best with crystal sets. The German broadcasts in Polish, in themselves very effective and of outstanding importance for the, in every respect more advanced, Western regions, play practically no part in the villages of Central Poland. But even this part of the population, living in primitive cultural conditions, is subjected to Polish propaganda, through meetings and patriotic demonstrations by Government supporters and other political groups; it is to be noted here that even the opposition parties have ranged themselves without exception and unconditionally behind the policy of the Government.

2) *The Polish Clergy*: In this connection special attention is due to the activities of the Polish clergy, whose influence is very great on account of the deep religious feeling still permeating all sections of the population. They lend themselves all the more willingly and fully to using their personal influence on the population, along the lines of Polish anti-German propaganda, since their own aims fully coincide with those of the State. It can even be said that the Polish clergy have often placed themselves at the head of the anti-German movement. They announce to the people that Poland is on the threshold of a "holy war" against German Neo-Paganism.<sup>4</sup> They constantly spread rumours about alleged oppression of Catholics in the Reich and their bellicosity can hardly be surpassed. It is reported that some of the

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<sup>4</sup> This would appear to be based on information from Kohnert, a leader of the German minority in Poland, who was referred to by name in Moltke's letter to Schliep (see footnote 1 above) as having drawn particular attention to the activities of the Catholic Church in Poland, in fomenting a bellicose spirit and even to some extent making propaganda for a Holy War. Kohnert had also spoken of the decline in the feelings of respect previously entertained by the Poles for the Germans, owing to their superior skill, but which was diminished through seeing the German minority ill-treated.

clergy in the villages are already offering prayers for a Polish victory and have stated that they cannot pray for peace as they are in favour of war. Prayers for peace ordered by the Cardinal<sup>5</sup> were in many cases transformed by the clergy into prayers for a Polish victory. Given the uneducated state of the great mass it can be imagined what an impression such influence by the Church creates.

c) *The morale of the population*

The peculiar structure of the Polish population and the propaganda skilfully applied to it, have had the effect that in the central regions of Poland the will to resist is obviously still unbroken, also amongst the masses of the population. The slogans of Government propaganda are blindly believed. Thus very wide circles are really convinced that Poland is on the side of the future victors, that in Germany the population is starving, that every day hordes of starving German soldiers and workers desert to Poland, that German war material is of very questionable value as it is only *ersatz* and that German foreign policy is suffering one defeat after another. Likewise, it has been possible profoundly to convince public opinion that a fight for Danzig means a fight for the independence of Poland. In the last few weeks Polish propaganda has even managed to persuade the population that a war against Poland and her allies would be so hopeless for Germany from the start that Germany would probably never dare to pick a quarrel with Poland. At the same time the resumption of normal life regardless of the "German threats" has been advocated. The result of this propaganda has at least been that, in Poland at the present moment, people do not quite believe in war and that, for example, the holiday traffic, which until recently was at a complete standstill owing to the fear of war, is in full swing again, so that now most Polish spas are said to be well patronized. The tranquillity which is thus expressed must not, however, be mistaken for a decline or crumbling of morale. On the contrary, Polish propaganda would, if need arose, be able to fan the chauvinistic spirit into white heat at any time.

Even in those sections of the intelligentsia which have some experience of foreign countries and therefore can more accurately assess the value of this unrestrained propaganda and the true ratio of strength between Germany and Poland, the spirit of resistance is still present in undiminished form. These circles do, however, take into account the fact that, in the event of war, Germany's supremacy would probably soon force Poland to evacuate fairly large areas. They are convinced, however, that this could only be a temporary evacuation and that, even if Poland were completely occupied by German troops in the course of a war, she would nevertheless in the end, thanks to the victory of the coalition, arise again even greater and more powerful than ever.

<sup>5</sup> Cardinal Augustyn Hlond, Archbishop of Gniezno-Poznań.

A certain love of gambling, inherent in the Polish character, now even misleads many into thinking that Poland, in order to counteract the German attrition tactics, should attack sooner rather than later.

This whole optimistic attitude is, however, based on the presumption that confidence in Poland's allies, especially in Great Britain, remains unshaken. In this respect the failure of the Anglo-Polish negotiations for a loan<sup>6</sup> have, without doubt, caused a certain nervousness, all the more so as the Hudson-Wohlthat negotiations,<sup>7</sup> which became known at the same time, were likewise apt to occasion some doubt about the absolute reliability of the British ally. Nevertheless no defeatist spirit has so far arisen in consequence, and Polish propaganda has done its utmost to parry the blow; it will therefore be as well not to overestimate these events and their repercussions. Further happenings of this kind, however, might perhaps exert more influence on the morale of the masses.

## II. *The situation in the Frontier Areas*

The morale in the Polish frontier districts is for various reasons subject to greater fluctuations than is the case in the Polish central areas. Here Polish Government propaganda has a critical public, not merely influenced by German propaganda through the most varied channels, but, rather, knowing from direct observation the true ratio of strength between Germany and Poland, and being in a position to convince itself of the falsity of many Polish assertions. In addition, this frontier population, placed in the uncomfortable feeling of living in tomorrow's theatre of war, is particularly sensitive in its reactions to all preparations for, and rumours of, war. The economic consequences of the political tension, too, particularly affect the western parts of the country, as the banks, on the one hand, observe the utmost reserve in their credit policy, whilst the Government, on the other, prefer to spend the funds at their disposal for investment in the more centrally situated parts of the country. Finally the effect of constantly living alongside the German minority must also be mentioned.

In spite of these unfavourable premises for the Polish propaganda of "holding out", there can, as yet, be no question of any imminent collapse of morale or of any serious crippling of the will to resist in the Polish population in the frontier areas. Isolated instances, which doubtless deserve attention, must not be over-estimated in their importance for the development of the situation as a whole. Nor do the *Volksdeutsche*, either, by any means agree in their assessment of the will to resist of the Poles in the western frontier areas. Whereas the Consulate General at Poznań is informed of a progressive decline in the moral and

<sup>6</sup> A Polish financial and economic mission headed by Colonel Adam Koc had arrived in London on June 14. For the course of these negotiations see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, chapters IV-VII.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 698.

material powers of resistance, influential *volksdeutsch* circles have reported to me the exact opposite. According to them the national spirit of the Polish masses in Poznań and Pommerellen has recently been greatly enhanced, in particular by the many acts of violence perpetrated against the German minority, which clearly demonstrated that the Germans need no longer be respected.<sup>4</sup>

According to the reports from the different Consulates General and Consulates the morale in the various districts appears to be as follows:

a) *In Upper Silesia*

In Upper Silesia it seems that the antagonism between Poles migrating there from central Poland and Galicia, who occupy lucrative posts in industry and administration, and the native Upper Silesians, who feel at a disadvantage, has sharpened recently. According to the report of the Consulate General<sup>5</sup> this opposition has become particularly marked since the advent of the German-Polish tension, at a time, therefore, when the concept of Polish nationalism and of the Polish State is being put to the test for the first time in the Upper Silesian frontier district. It is manifest that the indigenous Polish population is essentially indifferent to the aims of Polish foreign policy. Whether, however—as the Consulate General concludes—the native Upper Silesian is already prepared to put up with “all political consequences, however they may turn out” must for the present be left open. For the considerable number of Polish Upper Silesians who have, in the last few years, taken an active part in the brutal extermination campaign against the German community, there can hardly even now be any possibility of reconciliation with the German community. Nevertheless there seems to be a weak spot here, or one about to develop. According to the report of the Consulate General in Katowice feelings do not appear to be united even in the Polish national upper class. Whereas the will to resist of the youth is still unimpaired, the powers of resistance of other groups are assessed much less favourably. Summing up, the Consulate General establish that the Polish national upper stratum in Upper Silesia, taken as a whole, has indeed already been considerably weakened in its powers of resistance.

b) *In the Olza area*

Exactly the opposite is reported from the Olza area,<sup>6</sup> where so far it has not been possible to perceive any growing depression among the national Poles there. Here too, however, there is a certain antagonism between the national Poles and the native population, the so-called Slonzaks.

<sup>4</sup> Report No. 1494 of July 27, 1939, from Katowice (not printed, 2908/566108-10).

<sup>5</sup> In report No. 527 of July 27 from the Consulate at Teschen (not printed, 2908/566097-99).

c) *In Poznań*

The assessment of morale in the Poznań district will be substantially known from the report of the Consulate General referred to at the beginning of this despatch. From a second report on morale by the Consulate General at Poznań,<sup>10</sup> confirming their earlier observations, it may be further gathered that, in the frontier areas there, a number of cases have already occurred where Polish landlords have tried to take out a sort of reinsurance by paving the way for good relations with *volksdeutsch* circles. Against this, the attitude of the intelligentsia in Poznań is still described as showing a fair amount of resistance, even if the outward attitude may not always coincide with the inner views. *Volksdeutsch* circles have described the mood of this upper stratum in the words: "inward apprehension, outward bravado".

d) *In Pommerellen*

According to information from the Consulate General at Toruń<sup>11</sup> the will to resist any diminution of Polish rights is still alive there in all sections of the population. Even the economic stagnation apparent here has not, by and large, led to any weakening of the powers of resistance, since Polish propaganda represents Germany as responsible for this.

e) *In the Cracow area*

Nor is there, according to the report of the Consulate<sup>12</sup> there, any breakdown in morale so far to be observed in the Cracow district either. Polish propaganda is still believed. They still feel a certain security through Great Britain providing rear cover and the legend of the "invincible" Polish army.

f) *In the Lwów District*

Special circumstances prevail in the Lwów district<sup>13</sup> where the Ukrainian problem overshadows all other questions. There are no signs here yet that the Polish will to resist has suffered seriously in the frontier district recently, even if a certain disillusionment and uncertainty over future developments can be noted.

III. *Powers of economic resistance*

In Poland's powers of economic resistance there have been no substantial changes during the last two months. On the whole the Polish Government have succeeded in substantially overcoming the occasional tendencies towards a crisis by stepping up the armaments drive, although the retail trade still suffers from a heavily reduced turnover.

<sup>10</sup> Dated July 29 (not printed, 2908/566111-14).

<sup>11</sup> In report No. 3151 of July 29 (not printed, 3277/E588242-44).

<sup>12</sup> This report is embodied in a letter of July 27 (not printed, 2908/566100-03) from Consul Schillinger to Moltke.

<sup>13</sup> Based on report No. Kult 1/85 of July 27 from the Consulate at Lwów (not printed, 2908/566104-07).

The index of Polish industrial production rose from 125·8 at the end of May, to 129·8 at the end of June, and is thus still about 9 per cent above the index of June last year. Nor has financing the mobilization caused the Polish Government any insuperable difficulties so far either. The Polish Government have not even been forced to have recourse to the legal facilities which exist for increasing the money in circulation. On the basis of the available stocks of gold, the money in circulation could still be increased by over 400 million Zloty without reaching the limit of the required cover. Nor, for the next few weeks, is a radical change in the economic and financial position to be expected. For further details reference may be made to my report of June 13 of this year on the "Polish economy under the influence of permanent partial mobilization", W.Abt 1/6.<sup>14</sup> The facts established in this report still apply today.

The army call-up has so far had no disturbing effect on the Polish labour market, because of the latent unemployment, amounting to millions, in the countryside.

#### IV. *Conclusions*

The four months of political tension and of Polish partial mobilization—as may be seen from the above observations—have so far failed to make any decisive breach in Polish moral and material powers of resistance. Certainly a few weak spots are obviously beginning to show—even though at present only in the frontier districts—and if the state of tension lasts for some time these weak spots may perhaps assume greater significance. For the immediate future, however, should nothing extraordinary intervene, such as for instance loss of confidence in British aid, a decisive collapse of Polish morale and will to resistance cannot be expected.<sup>15</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>14</sup> Not printed (2102/455262-77). This report concluded that a Polish economic collapse could not be expected.

<sup>15</sup> This document is initialled by Weizsäcker and Ribbentrop.

No. 755

1570/380058-59

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 347

BERLIN, August 2, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

Our telegram No. 346 of August 1<sup>2</sup> is cancelled and I herewith inform

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

you that your departure must be arranged to suit the further development of the Abetz case. I inform you in strict confidence that Abetz is already in France and will arrive in Paris within the next few days. His visit is a purely private one. He is only concerned with the law-suit he has brought against Kérillis.<sup>3</sup> I request you to afford Abetz all possible help in dealing with the law-suit, and also to arrange for a press communiqué on the institution of the proceedings. Further information on this and on the proceedings in general will be given you by Abetz orally. I request you to accommodate Abetz as a private person in the Embassy.

Until an uninterrupted stay by Abetz for the purpose of conducting his suit is assured, you are requested to remain in Paris. After Abetz's position has been cleared up, however, there will be no objections to your plan to pay a short visit to Berlin. You will then be given further instructions by the Reich Foreign Minister. Your return to Paris is envisaged for the middle of August.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> Henri de Kérillis, Deputy and journalist. Editor of *L'Epoque*.

## No. 756

74/138023-30

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, August 2, 1939.

The Japanese Counsellor of Embassy, Usami, called on me today for a lengthy conversation for which he had obviously worked out an exact programme:

#### 1) *Economic cooperation in North China*

He began by stating that his Government attached great importance to the closest possible economic cooperation with Germany in North China. As far as the well-known "Pro Memoria"<sup>1</sup> was concerned, the Japanese Government, as shown by the instructions recently reaching the Embassy here, took the view that they could not give in writing any such promise regarding the treatment of German trade in North China. They were, however, prepared to give German trade in practice as favourable treatment as possible and had also arranged that the Japanese authorities in North China should act accordingly. The Japanese Government had also entrusted a special commission, composed of the competent officials of the Foreign Ministry and the Ministries of War and the Navy, with the task of studying the promotion of German-Japanese cooperation in North China. Besides this, there

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. I of this Series, document No. 602.



was a special office called "Koain" for all North China affairs, which came directly under the Minister President, and which was equivalent to a special Ministry for these affairs. German-Japanese economic co-operation in North China could continue to be dealt with by our Ambassador in Tokyo in conjunction with these authorities, all the more so since, as he had heard in confidence, our Reich representatives in North China had also recently been placed under our Ambassador in Tokyo for their economic activities.

I replied to this that, from what he had said, the actual position respecting the "Pro Memoria" had apparently not changed since my last conversations on the subject with Ambassador Oshima last winter,<sup>2</sup> at least not in the sense of the Japanese being any more forthcoming towards our desires. Already at that time the Japanese Government had refused to commit themselves in writing, but had promised us "preferential" treatment in practice, a promise recently repeated by the Ambassador to me; whereas now Usami was merely speaking about the treatment being "as favourable as possible". During last winter and spring there had, however, been no signs of particularly favourable treatment being given to German trade in North China by the Japanese authorities. Recently I had not heard of any more complaints on this score, so did not wish to go further into the matter today.

As to the Reich representatives in North China being placed under our Embassy in Tokyo for economic matters, as Usami had mentioned, I had, perhaps on account of my recent leave, heard nothing. In practice it was, however, only natural that the Ambassador in Tokyo should also discuss with the Japanese Government such economic questions as affected the Japanese occupied parts of China.

## 2) *Hapro<sup>3</sup> Treaty and War Supplies for China*

Usami went on to say that there were still some factors disturbing German-Japanese economic cooperation in North China, e.g., our so-called Hapro-Treaty with the Chinese Government was causing a certain amount of disquiet in Tokyo. He would therefore be grateful for more detailed information about this Treaty, such as the sort of goods exchanged, amount of the credit, duration etc. I gave him the information and emphasized that deliveries of war material were also excluded under the Hapro-Treaty.

Usami then brought up two cases of alleged delivery of war material to China. One concerned the firm of Siemssen and was new to me; I promised to look into it. The other concerned the firm of Augsburg & Co., which has been established to be a Swiss firm. I handed him our *démenti* already issued a month ago on this.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 540 and 545.

<sup>3</sup> Handelsgesellschaft für industrielle Produkte m.b.H., a German company for the activities of which see vol. I of this Series, document No. 500 and footnote 52a thereto.

<sup>4</sup> No record has been found.

3) *German-Russian economic negotiations*

Usami again enquired<sup>5</sup> about the state of these negotiations, whether they would soon be concluded, whether it was correct that a credit of 200 million RM would be negotiated and that we wished to deliver considerable quantities of machine tools to the Russians. He pointed out that it was precisely the delivery of such machinery, which would strengthen Russian armaments as against Japan, which would be misunderstood in Tokyo. I replied that negotiations were continuing but nothing could yet be said about the prospects of concluding an agreement. This time too, as in all previous economic negotiations with Russia, a credit for the purchase of goods and the delivery of German machinery to Russia were under discussion. This was nothing unusual; from the natural economic structure of the two countries their trade relations consisted in the exchange of Russian raw materials, primarily timber, manganese and oil, which were extremely valuable, indeed absolutely vital for us, for German manufactured goods, which had always included a considerable percentage of machinery. At present Germany depended all the more on these Russian raw materials since the great raw material area of the USA, from which Japan derived substantial supplies, was closed to us. That Germany should obtain the raw materials absolutely essential for her armament was not only in Germany's but also in Japan's interests. Such links would surely be appreciated by those Japanese quarters which showed themselves disturbed by the German-Russian economic negotiations. Usami seemed satisfied with this, thanked me for pointing it out and said he would inform his Ambassador of it as soon as the latter had returned from leave.

Submitted through the State Secretary to the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

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<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 638.

No. 757

276/178506-09

*Senior Counsellor Schnurre to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BERLIN, August 2, 1939.

Received August 4.

MY DEAR COUNT: I received your letter of July 28<sup>1</sup> this morning. Herr Hollender<sup>2</sup> appears to have expressed himself in a very unfortunate manner in his communication to the Embassy. On his return from Moscow he told me that Soyuspushnina<sup>3</sup> had practically asked him

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Gerhard Hollender, sometime President of the International Fur Association.

<sup>3</sup> A trade organization controlling the sale of furs in the U.S.S.R.

to call on Mikoyan and to have an appointment made for him by the Embassy. I told Herr Hollender that I personally would have had no objection to this and that my telegram to the Embassy<sup>4</sup> had been intended to show the Embassy my interest in his trip. I should indeed have been quite glad if he had gone to Mikoyan, as thus we should have given Mikoyan an opportunity to show good will, at least in some small way. I will point out to Herr Hollender when he next calls on me that his account is not entirely correct.

As you will have seen from one of my memoranda, the Foreign Minister did indeed attach importance to German businessmen going to Moscow and perhaps learning something there which could be of value to us. You know that I am just as sceptical about these possibilities as you are. I have, however, on my side lifted the ban on visits to Moscow. Even so, Herr Gaspar of the firm of Otto Wolff, who was the first to whom I gave permission to travel to Moscow, has had little luck so far, as the Trade Delegation here informed him point blank that they saw no real reason for his journey at the moment and therefore could not recommend Moscow to grant him a visa. Visiting M. Smolenski was obviously not regarded as a suitable reason. Herr Gaspar has consequently not a good word to say for the Russians.

Astakhov suggested to the State Secretary last week that the Soviet Government should invite two official German representatives to the Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow as a further sign of the normalization and improvement of relations.<sup>5</sup> The Foreign Minister has approved, so that the official reply will presumably be made to M. Astakhov today. However, as the opening was yesterday, the invitation can only be considered as for a later date. Ministerialdirektor Moritz of the Reich Food Ministry and Prof. Conrad Meyer of Berlin University are likely to be the German representatives. Possibly also the Landesbauernführer for Mecklenburg, Count Grote.

M. Babarin called on me again yesterday as Moscow's postman and left with me the latest proposals, which contain further concessions by the Russians on essential points (deliveries of raw materials and interest). I think we shall now manage to conclude an agreement. The material on yesterday's discussion will reach the Embassy in the form of a despatch.<sup>6</sup>

*Secret.* Politically, the problem of Russia is being dealt with here with *extreme urgency*. During the last ten days I have daily had at least one direct or telephone conversation with the Foreign Minister and know that he is also constantly exchanging views with the Führer on this. The Foreign Minister is concerned to obtain some result in the Russian question as soon as possible, not only on the negative side

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 714.

<sup>6</sup> Neither the proposals nor the despatch have been found.

(disturbing the British negotiations) but also on the positive side (an understanding with us). Hence also the haste with which we sent you the last instructions.<sup>7</sup> You can imagine how eagerly your talks with Molotov are awaited here. It is possible that the Foreign Minister will himself receive Astakhov for a short time today to tell him that he had heard of my interview with him and that he hopes matters will develop along these lines.

With sincere greetings and best wishes for your difficult and responsible work, I am, my dear Ambassador.

Yours etc.

SCHNURRE

<sup>7</sup> Presumably the instructions contained in documents Nos. 736 and 744.

### No. 758

695/260368

#### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

SECRET

BERLIN, August 3, 1939—12:58 p.m.

MOST URGENT

Received August 3—6 p.m.

No. 165 of August 3

For the Ambassador personally.

Yesterday I had a lengthy conversation with Astakhov on which a telegram follows.<sup>1</sup>

On this occasion I expressed the German wish for remoulding German-Russian relations and stated that, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, there was no problem which could not be solved to our mutual satisfaction. In response to Astakov's desire for more concrete conversations on topical questions of interest to both countries, I declared myself ready for such conversations if the Soviet Government would cause me to be informed through Astakhov that they also desired to place German-Russian relations on a new and definitive basis.

RIBBENTROP

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 760.

### No. 759

695/260369

#### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

SECRET

BERLIN, August 3, 1939—1:47 p.m.

MOST URGENT

Received August 3—6:00 p.m.

No. 164 of August 3

For the Ambassador for information.

With reference to our telegram of today.<sup>1</sup>

In view of the political situation and in the interests of speed, we are anxious without prejudice to your conversation with Molotov scheduled for today,<sup>2</sup> to continue in more concrete terms in Berlin the conversation on harmonizing German-Soviet interests. To this end Schnurre will receive Astakhov today and will tell him that we would be ready for a continuation on more concrete lines, if that is also the desire of the Soviet Government. We would propose, in this case, that Astakhov obtain instructions on this from Moscow. We should then be prepared to speak quite concretely concerning problems of possible interest to the Soviet Union.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 758.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 744, footnote 3.

## No. 760

127/69519-21

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 166 of August 3

BERLIN, August 3, 1939—3:47 p.m.

Received August 4—4:30 a.m.

For the Ambassador personally.

Last night I received the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who had previously called at the Ministry on other matters.<sup>1</sup> I intended to continue with him the conversations with which you are familiar and which had been previously conducted with Astakhov by members of the Foreign Ministry with my permission. I started with the trade treaty discussions which are at present progressing satisfactorily, and described such a trade agreement as a good step on the way toward the normalization of German-Russian relations, if this were desired. It was well known that the tone of our press with regard to Russia had for more than six months been substantially different.<sup>2</sup> I considered that, insofar as the Russians so desired, a remoulding of our relations would be possible on two conditions:

a) Non-interference in the internal affairs of the other State (M. Astakhov believes that he can promise this forthwith).

b) Abandonment of a policy directed against our vital interests. To this Astakhov was unable to give an entirely clear-cut answer,<sup>3</sup> but he thought his Government had the desire to pursue a policy of understanding with Germany.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 761.

<sup>2</sup> The Berlin draft of this telegram (34/23889-91) here reads: "more moderate".

<sup>3</sup> The Berlin draft here reads: "a clear-cut answer".

I continued that our policy was an unswerving and long-range one; we were in no hurry. We were favourably disposed towards Moscow; it was, therefore, a question of what direction the rulers there wished to take. If Moscow took ...<sup>4</sup> attitude, we should know where we stood and how to act. If the reverse were the case, there was no problem from the Baltic to the Black Sea that could not be solved between the two of us. I said that there was room for the two of us on the Baltic and that Russian interests by no means needed to clash with ours there. As far as Poland was concerned, we were watching further developments attentively and ice cold. In case of Polish provocation we would settle accounts with Poland in the space of a week. For this contingency, I dropped a gentle hint at our coming to an understanding with Russia on the fate of Poland. I described German-Japanese relations as good and friendly; these relations were lasting ones. As to Russian-Japanese relations, however, I had my own special ideas (by which I meant a long-term *modus vivendi* between the two countries).

I conducted the whole conversation in a tone of composure and in conclusion again made it clear to the Chargé d'Affaires that in high policy we pursued no such tactics as did the democratic Powers. We were accustomed to building on solid ground, did not need to pay heed to vacillating public opinion, and did not desire any sensations. If conversations such as ours were not handled with the discretion they deserved, they would have to be discontinued. We were making no fuss about it; the choice lay, as had been said, with Moscow. If they were interested there in our ideas, then M. Molotov could, when convenient, pick up the threads again with Count Schulenburg (this has been superseded by our telegram No. 164).<sup>5</sup>

End of conversation.

Addition for Count Schulenburg:

I conducted the conversation without showing any haste. The Chargé d'Affaires, who seemed interested, tried several times to pin the conversation down to more concrete terms, whereupon I gave him to understand that I would be prepared to make it more concrete as soon as the Soviet Government officially communicated their fundamental desire<sup>6</sup> for remoulding our relations. Should Astakhov be instructed in this sense, we for our part should be interested in coming to more concrete terms at an early date. This exclusively for your personal information.

RIBBENTROP

<sup>4</sup> The Berlin draft here reads: "a negative attitude".

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 759.

<sup>6</sup> The Berlin draft here reads: "communicated their desire in principle for ..."

## No. 761

34/23892-94

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 3, 1939.

W 1251 g.

1) The Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, Astakhov, called on me by appointment today at 12:30 p.m. We first discussed the stage reached in the economic negotiations, for which Astakhov readily and willingly offered me his good offices. I put up for discussion informally the question of embodying a political concept in the preamble or in a secret final protocol. Astakhov personally evinced positive interest in this idea. We proposed in a further conversation on economic questions to go into this idea, too, more thoroughly.

2) The conversation then turned to yesterday's interview which Astakhov had had with the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup> Astakhov said that what he had been told by the Foreign Minister tallied with what I had told him<sup>2</sup> except for one point; I had with some urgency described the present juncture as opportune, whereas yesterday the Foreign Minister had shown no such urgency. He had informed Molotov of all the details of the conversation he had had with me at the time. He had received a provisional answer from Molotov along the following lines: Astakhov's report had created great interest. They too hoped for a normalization of and improvement in relations with Germany. Like us, they regarded the conclusion of the economic treaty as marking stage 1 in the shaping of our relations. For the rest, Molotov said that, so far, nothing concrete was known of Germany's attitude, nor had Ambassador Count Schulenburg so far made any such statements.

3) Following this account of Molotov's attitude from Astakhov, I mentioned to him the points with which we are now concerned.

a) We would be prepared to continue the conversations on a concrete basis, but first we must be informed officially that Moscow also desired the talks to be made concrete. It would be useful if, on this occasion, the Soviet interests could be clearly defined for us so that the conversation about more concrete terms could be more easily initiated.

b) We attached importance to the talks being continued in Berlin, as it seemed to us that, with the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary available, it would be easier to discuss matters thoroughly here than in Moscow. Should the Soviet Government agree, we would welcome it if he, Astakhov, received appropriate instructions.

c) As to the time, I told M. Astakhov that, though the Foreign

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 760.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 729.

Minister last night had not shown any urgency to the Soviet Government, we nevertheless thought it expedient to make use of *the next few days* for continuing the conversations, in order to establish a basis as quickly as possible.

4. I mentioned to M. Astakhov that our Ambassador would have an interview with M. Molotov today and that the Ambassador was acquainted with the ideas discussed with Astakhov here in Berlin. We welcomed this discussion, but, for the reasons stated, we would propose that the conversations should be continued in Berlin.

Astakhov for his part conducted the conversation on very positive lines. He assured me unasked that matters were being treated with absolute discretion on the Soviet side and particularly by himself in Berlin. Not even his colleagues at the Embassy were informed of these conversations. I replied that absolute discretion was of course a prerequisite for everything further. For the rest, ideas were discussed as set forth in my memorandum on the last conversation I had with him on July 27.<sup>2</sup> Astakhov will telegraph Molotov forthwith.

SCHNURRE

## No. 762

174/188032

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

SECRET

TOKYO, August 3, 1939—8:30 p.m.

No. 335 of August 3

Received August 3—4 p.m.

With reference to my telegram No. 331 of July 29.<sup>1</sup>

For the State Secretary.

With reference to the Tientsin negotiations, well informed confidants from the Foreign Ministry state that contrary to press reports gradual agreement is definitely to be expected. The Foreign Minister is striving urgently for success in the negotiations; the British Ambassador is exerting all his influence with Chamberlain in the direction of further concessions. References to the sword of Damocles made by British statesmen are made light of by the Foreign Ministry as intended for British home consumption.

The Army is increasingly concerned about these developments being dangerous for the idea of the alliance. The Five Minister Conference will take place tomorrow at the instigation of the War Minister, who is said to be very determined to press forward with the alliance even at the risk of a Cabinet crisis.<sup>2</sup>

OTT

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 735.

<sup>2</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 763.



## No. 763

2102/455441- 45

*The Consul at Lwów to the Foreign Ministry*

No. Pol. g/103

Lwów, August 3, 1939.

Received August 7.

Pol. V 7492.

Subject: Feeling amongst the Ukrainians. Their attitude in the event of an armed German-Polish conflict.

With reference to my telegram No. 22 of August 2, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

After the German-Polish tension began and Poland's position in foreign affairs became increasingly difficult, the Ukrainians have seen the opportunity approaching for which they had longed for many years, namely of realizing the aim of a free Ukraine. In their national aspirations the Ukrainians count on, and firmly believe in, help from the Führer and Germany. Germany stood beside the cradle of the Ukrainian State of 1917, and also during the post-war years lent support to the Ukrainians in many ways. Since April 1939, Germany has become Poland's great opponent and in the Ukrainian view must, if only for this reason, automatically be a friend to the Ukrainians. Due to this consideration and their traditional and fundamentally pro-German attitude, the Ukrainians have also recovered comparatively quickly from their profound disappointment over the collapse of the Carpatho-Ukraine<sup>2</sup> and as early as the beginning of May they regained their faith in Germany and her Führer. The anxiety felt by a small stratum of the intelligentsia, that Germany might in certain circumstances again sacrifice the Ukraine for the sake of relations with Russia, is of no importance in view of the convictions held by the broad masses of the Ukrainians.

The Poles are not unaware of this attitude of the Ukrainians. In order to remove the great danger which, especially in times of tension in foreign relations, threatens the existence of the Polish State from within, the Poles have tried time and again since last April to come to terms with the Ukrainians. These Polish attempts are pointless from the start as long as they are based only on friendly advances in the Polish press and not on real offers from official Polish quarters. Only if the Polish Government could decide on a far-reaching offer of autonomy would the conditions be created for placing Polish-Ukrainian relations on a different basis. The Polish Government cannot make such a generous move, as it would not have the support of Polish public

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5456/E366653). This telegram reported that between July 29 and 31 several hundred Ukrainians, mostly from the intelligentsia, had been arrested by the Poles in East Galicia.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note on p. 90.

opinion. On the other hand the time for a settlement, intended seriously by both sides, is also past, as the hatred of the Ukrainians for the Poles has meantime bitten so deeply that the Ukrainians would regard an autonomy statute only as a tactical gain, and not as a final solution.

The Ukrainian leaders, and in particular the leaders of "UNDO"<sup>3</sup> the Ukrainian majority party, however, are trying, if only for tactical reasons, to keep alive in the Poles the belief that they would be prepared for a settlement, if suitable concessions were made. On the other hand, knowing the real feeling of the broad masses of Ukrainians, they keep on warning their fellow countrymen against dissipating the Ukrainian zeal for freedom in fruitless outbursts, causing incalculable harm by a disastrous policy and bringing about the complete destruction of the Ukrainian people. (Dymytry Lewyckyj in *Dilo* of July 27, 1939.)

Undoubtedly at present a dangerous mood prevails amongst the Ukrainians. The petty methods of Polish chicanery and oppression are wasted and of no effect. Even the larger scale terror actions, the so-called "pacifications", which took place a few weeks ago in several districts of the Tarnopol Voyvodship, can no longer break the Ukrainians' will to freedom. (See my reports of July 21 and 28, 1939, Nos. Pol. g./71 and 87.)<sup>4</sup> In their anxiety about developments in Ukrainian affairs the Polish Government have taken preventive measures and, in the last few days, have caused mass arrests of Ukrainians to be made. The arrests were intended particularly to weaken the Ukrainian ruling class and therefore affected principally clergy, doctors, lawyers, teachers and officials of economic organizations. A separate report on the details of this action is being sent by the same post.<sup>5</sup>

Poland's action throws an interesting light on the Polish Government's assessment of the international situation, for they are thus already adopting measures which the Ukrainians have always expected if war threatened. The Poles wish to secure their rear in good time.

From my impressions up to now, there seems no doubt that, in the event of an armed conflict between Germany and Poland, the Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia would rise as one man. It may be expected that the Ukrainians will have taken possession of the Polish estates and the scattered new Polish settlements in Eastern Galicia within a few days and driven out or slaughtered the Poles. The police posts, which in danger areas are still only manned by five men, would be

<sup>3</sup> The Ukrainian National Democratic Union (Ukrajinske Natsionalno-Demokratychnye Obyedinenye).

<sup>4</sup> The report of July 21 (not printed, 8278/E588248-49) gave instances of sentences passed on Ukrainians by Polish courts for alleged illegal activities. That of July 28 (not printed, 8274/E588209-20) commented on and enclosed the text of the two articles in *Dilo* by Dymytry Lewyckyj.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (8495/E597026-27).

overrun by the rebels. In one to two weeks after the outbreak of the general revolt in Eastern Galicia, the country, with the exception of the predominantly Polish towns and those places occupied by garrisons or frontier police in barracks, would be in the hands of the Ukrainians. To achieve this aim, the Ukrainians would be prepared to sustain even heavy losses, which would be inevitable in view of their obviously short supply of arms.

In the formerly Russian territories of Poland, revolts would likewise occur here and there among the Ukrainian population even if, lacking good organization, they remained localized.

The assumption that, in an armed German-Polish conflict, the Ukrainians would first await events, in order not to be again disappointed by Germany, as over the Carpatho-Ukraine, would be a complete misreading of the Ukrainian character. On the contrary, there is the grave danger that, in an acute German-Polish crisis like that between Germany and Czechoslovakia in September 1938, the Ukrainians would let fly too soon in order to forestall Polish measures, such as further mass arrests and even massacres, and in order not to be too late for the liberation of their country.

The German Embassy in Warsaw is receiving a copy of this report.  
SEELOS

## No. 764

2770/530559-60

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1661

Moscow, August 3, 1939.

Received August 5.

Pol. II 2795.

With reference to my other reports.<sup>1</sup>

Enclosed herewith is a translation of the Tass communiqué published in the Soviet press on August 2, regarding the statements of the British Under-Secretary of State, Butler,<sup>2</sup> on the progress of the Moscow pact negotiations.

The publication of this communiqué is taken by the Diplomatic Corps here to mean that, even though Britain and France have made a further concession by sending Military Missions, the Soviet Government are not inclined to change their minds on the question of guaranteeing the Baltic States against an indirect attack and to make concessions in this matter.

SCHULENBURG

<sup>1</sup> A pencilled marginal note refers to Moscow telegrams No. 144 of July 28 (not printed, 7891/E571513) and No. 153 of Aug. 2 (not printed, 1625/389144) which were reports of a press interview by Strang and of the treatment in the Soviet press of statements in the House of Commons by Chamberlain and Butler.

<sup>2</sup> On July 31; see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 350, cols. 2094-2100. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 512 and 530.

[Enclosure]

## TASS COMMUNIQUE

In his speech in the House of Commons, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Butler, said, as reported in the press, that the British Government were taking all measures with a view to hastening the removal of existing differences of opinion between the Soviet Union and Britain and that the chief difference of opinion was the question whether we should infringe the independence of the Baltic States or not. I am of the opinion, said Mr. Butler, that we should not do this and that it is just in this difference of opinion that the chief reasons for the delay in the negotiations are to be found.

TASS are authorized to state that, if Mr. Butler really made the foregoing statements, he has misrepresented the attitude of the Soviet Union. In actual fact the differences of opinion do not lie in the question of infringement or non-infringement of the independence of the Baltic States, since both parties are in favour of guaranteeing that independence, but in the question of not leaving, in the formula about "indirect aggression", any loophole for an aggressor to risk an attempt on the independence of the Baltic States. This is one of the reasons for the delay in the negotiations.

(Izvestia of August 2, 1939.)

## No. 765

7693/E548475-78

*The Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig to the  
President of the Danzig Senate*<sup>1</sup>

Translation.

DANZIG, August 3, 1939.  
Pol. V 8440.

MR. PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE: In reply to your Note of July 29,<sup>2</sup> 1939, concerning the rights of the Polish Customs Inspectors, I must first remark that I did not consider it advisable to communicate to my Government the full text of this Note, as its wording, which departs conspicuously from the rules of courtesy generally observed in official intercourse, would have caused it not to be taken note of. I have, therefore, confined myself solely to transmitting the essential substance of the statements by the Senate of the Free City, in the conviction that

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this document (97/108465-68) is filed with a minute of Aug. 5 (97/108464) circulating copies to the State Secretary, the Under State Secretary, the Deputy Director of the Political Department, Senior Counsellor Schliep, Minister Braun von Stumm, and Kult.Spez. This minute reads: "Yesterday midday the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig, Chodacki, handed the President of the Danzig Senate, Greiser, a Note, a translation of which is enclosed, in answer to the last Note of the Danzig Senate on the Customs Inspectorate dispute."

<sup>2</sup> Not printed; see document No. 749 and footnote 4 thereto.

the Senate will give consideration to the consequences to which the unsuitable methods applied recently by the Danzig Authorities in the sphere of Customs, and which are contrary to the Free City's treaty obligations, are bound to lead. For I should like to hope that respect for the treaties in force as well as appreciation of mutual interests might induce the Senate of the Free City to subject to revision the methods hitherto adopted by the Danzig officials in this sphere.

I do not intend once again to enter into an analysis of the relevant legal provisions which I discussed in detail in my previous communication, since it is sufficient to acquaint oneself with the text of the Paris Treaty<sup>3</sup> and the defining and supplementary provisions of the articles of the Warsaw Convention<sup>4</sup> and of the Polish-Danzig Agreement of 1934<sup>5</sup> in order to be convinced that the interpretation which the Senate tries to put on these provisions is both arbitrary and contrary to the normal practices followed over many years past, and is not compatible with the letter and spirit of the treaties obtaining.

It is, in particular, impossible to understand how the Senate conclude from the provisions of the Paris Treaty on the establishment of a special Danzig Customs Administration Unit of lower rank under the general supervision of the Central Authority, that is, in the present case, Poland's Central Customs Administration, with the special proviso that the Polish Customs Inspectors attached to the Danzig personnel shall, on behalf of the Polish Government, participate in the supervision of the Customs service, that suddenly the Senate are no longer bound by any further treaty provisions which regulate the rights of the Polish Customs Inspectors and at which, incidentally, the Senate have never previously demurred.

To contest the Polish Government's right to exercise comprehensive control over the application of Polish Customs regulations in the territory of the Free City of Danzig is to infringe the Polish Government's basic rights, which result from the Free City of Danzig belonging to the Polish Customs territory ("*La Ville Libre de Dantzig est placée en dedans des limites de la frontière douanière de la Pologne*"),<sup>6</sup> and the unity of Polish Customs legislation and Polish Customs tariffs in this territory, which is decisive for Customs questions in the territory of the Free City of Danzig.

In view of these facts, I see no necessity for discussing with the Senate

<sup>3</sup> The Convention between Poland and the Free City of Danzig concluded in accordance with Article 104 of the Treaty of Versailles, June 28, 1919, signed at Paris, Nov. 9, 1920. For the text, see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 113, pp. 965-973.

<sup>4</sup> The Convention between the Free City of Danzig and Poland for the purpose of Executing and Completing the Convention of November 9, 1920, governing their Mutual Relations, signed at Warsaw, Oct. 24, 1921. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 131, pp. 779-853.

<sup>5</sup> The Polish-Danzig Agreements of Aug. 6, 1934, are summarized in the League of Nations *Official Journal*, July-December, 1934, p. 1422-1423.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., "The Free City of Danzig is placed within the Polish Customs frontier."

of the Free City of Danzig a settlement of the question of the size of the staff and organization of the Polish Customs control which is paid for by the Polish Government, as this question lies exclusively within the latter's competence. I should like to observe, however, that the transfer of the functions of a Customs control unit in the Danzig area, which is included in the Polish Customs area, to Danzig Customs officers, is based on the assumption that the Danzig Customs Board will apply loyally and in full the provisions of the Polish Customs legislation and Polish Customs tariffs, and that their executive organs will carry out their duties strictly in accordance with the orders and regulations of the Central Customs Administration. Above all, such transfer presupposed the duty of preventing any kind of smuggling in the area where the Customs services had been transferred to Danzig officials. However, the conduct of the Customs authorities in the territory of the Free City of Danzig, and the obstructions recently placed by the Danzig authorities in the way of the Polish Customs Inspectors in the performance of their duties, appear to have no other purpose than to pave the way for widespread smuggling of arms and ammunition, the storage of which in the territory of the Free City is in direct contravention of its constitutional Statute.

In passing, I should like to observe that the fall in value of the goods handled by the Port of Danzig, which was caused by the price fluctuations in world markets, has nothing to do with the matter, as appears from the fact that the quantity and quality of these goods have not undergone any great variations, as can easily be ascertained from the statistical data.

The assertion that a certain number of Polish Customs Inspectors concern themselves with activities which have nothing to do with the supervision of the Danzig Customs personnel or the Danzig Frontier Control organs, I must again reject as unfounded or based on accusations which have no foundations in fact whatever as, for example, the accusation of manslaughter made against Customs Inspector Swida or accusations of military and economic espionage in a demilitarized territory and one forming an integral part of the Polish Customs territory, such as does the Free City of Danzig. Furthermore, I must protest most decidedly against the Senate of the Free City's arbitrary criticisms of the professional qualifications of some Inspectors, which only their superior Polish authorities are called upon to do.

It is, on the other hand, an undisputed fact that the Polish Customs Inspectors are exposed to continual provocation by the Danzig Customs personnel and to attacks by the population, at times in distinctly brutal ways, which I intend to discuss in detail at another time.

I should like to take this opportunity of also correcting the statement that the Polish-Danzig Agreement of May 22, 1937, on the inspection of products from the firm Amada Unida does not expire until July 31,

1940. According to Point 5 of this Agreement, its validity is extended each time for one year only, if no objection has been raised by July 20th (of each year). My declaration of July 19<sup>7</sup> was, however, presented before the expiry of this date. Nevertheless, the Polish Government would not object to bringing this Agreement back into force again, if the Senate would, for their part, restore the legal status in respect of the supervisory functions of the Polish Customs Inspectors, which has been infringed.

I must emphasize once again that the Polish Government's sole endeavour is to secure respect for the treaties obtaining in the sphere of the supervisory rights of the Polish Customs Inspectors and the loyal application of the Polish Customs regulations by the Danzig Customs Board. If the Senate of the Free City of Danzig be prompted by the same endeavours, then the removal of the causes of the present friction and misunderstandings should not encounter any great difficulties.

In conclusion I should like to observe that, since I am always inspired by the desire for cooperation between Poland and the Free City of Danzig in living together in accordance with the treaties, I would be prepared to seek further possibilities of settling, by means of direct conversations, all problems which have arisen in connection with the present situation, as soon as normal conditions have returned, both as concerns the activities of the Danzig Customs Board, and the supervision of their activities which is exercised by the Polish Government through the Polish Customs Inspectors attached to the Danzig personnel.

Kindly accept, Mr. President of the Senate, the assurance of my highest consideration.

CHODACKI

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<sup>7</sup> See document No. 702 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 766

34/23896-900

### *The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

MOST URGENT

MOSCOW, August 4, 1939—12:45 a.m.

No. 158 of August 3

Received August 4—5:40 a.m.

With reference to your despatch W 1216 g<sup>1</sup> of July 29 and your telegram of July 31.<sup>2</sup>

In today's conversation of one and a quarter hours, Molotov abandoned his habitual reserve and appeared unusually open. I referred to my last conversation with Molotov<sup>3</sup> and said that in the meantime

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 736.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 744.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 579 and 607.

the economic negotiations had been resumed in Berlin and were apparently proceeding in a promising manner. We were consequently expecting an early conclusion. Further, an exchange of ideas had taken place between Schnurre and Soviet representatives in Berlin<sup>4</sup> as to the substance of which Molotov was surely informed. Molotov confirmed that he was informed "in broad outline". Referring to Astakhov's question as to whether Schnurre's statement would, if necessary, also be supported by an authoritative German personage, I stated that I was instructed to confirm explicitly the views developed by Schnurre. I then explained how, on the basis of the three stages mentioned by Schnurre, we contemplated the normalization and improvement of our relations with the Soviet Union. In continuation I stated that, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, in our opinion, no differences existed between Germany and the Soviet Union, that the Anti-Comintern Pact was not directed against the Soviet Union, that by concluding non-aggression pacts with the Baltic States we had proved our determination to respect their integrity, and that our well-known demands on Poland meant no impairment of Soviet interests. We therefore believed that coming to terms on mutual interests was entirely possible and requested the opinion of the Soviet Government on this matter.

Molotov answered point by point at some length. He stated that the Soviet Government had always desired the conclusion of an economic agreement and that, if a like desire existed on the German side, he considered the prospects for realization of an economic agreement as entirely favourable. As far as the attitude of the Soviet press was concerned, he considered our reproaches—with some exceptions—unfounded. He held, however, that the press of both countries must desist from anything that might exacerbate their relations. He considered the gradual resumption of cultural relations necessary and expedient and noted the fact that a gratifying start had already been made toward improvement.

Going on to the question of political relations, Molotov stated that the Soviet Government also desired normalization and improvement of mutual relations. It was not their fault that relations had so deteriorated. The reason for this he saw, firstly, in the conclusion of the Anti-Comintern Pact and in everything that had been said and done in this connection. To my objection that the Anti-Comintern Pact was not directed against the Soviet Union, and had been described by Molotov himself on May 31 as an alliance against the Western democracies,<sup>5</sup> Molotov said that the Anti-Comintern Pact had, nevertheless, encouraged the aggressive attitude of Japan towards the Soviet Union. Secondly, Germany had supported Japan, and thirdly, the German

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 729.

<sup>5</sup> In his speech to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. See document No. 463.



Government had repeatedly shown that it would not participate in any international conferences in which the Soviet Union participated. Molotov cited the meeting in Munich as an example.

I thoroughly disagreed with Molotov, stressing that it was not . . .<sup>6</sup> discussing the past but of finding new ways.

Molotov replied that the Soviet Government were prepared to participate in the quest for such ways; yet he must insist on asking how my statements of today were to be reconciled with the three points mentioned by him. Proofs of a changed attitude of the German Government were for the present still lacking.

I thereupon again stressed the fact that there were no differences between us in foreign policy and mentioned German readiness to adopt such an attitude to the Baltic States, if occasion arose, as would safeguard vital Soviet interests in the Baltic Sea.

At the mention of the Baltic States, Molotov was interested in learning what States we meant by the term and whether Lithuania was also one of them.

On the Polish question I stated that we upheld our well-known demands on Poland but strove for a peaceful solution. If, on the other hand, a different solution were forced on us, we were prepared to protect all Soviet interests and come to an understanding with the Soviet Government on this matter.

Molotov showed evident interest but said that a peaceful solution depended first of all on us. I vigorously contradicted this and pointed out that the British guarantee had unfortunately brought it about that the decision lay with the Polish authorities.

I then rejected Molotov's assertion that Germany alone was to blame for the deterioration in German-Soviet relations. I reminded him of the fatal consequences of the conclusion of the Treaty of 1935 with France<sup>7</sup> and added that any new participation by the Soviet Government in a combination hostile to Germany might have similar consequences. Molotov replied that the secret [*sic*]<sup>8</sup> course taken by the Soviet Union was directed to purely defensive ends and to the strengthening of a defensive front against aggression. In contrast to this, Germany had supported and encouraged the aggressive attitude of Japan by the Anti-Comintern Pact, and in the Military Treaty of Alliance with Italy was pursuing offensive as well as defensive aims.

In conclusion Molotov assured me that he would apprise his Government of my statements and repeated that the Soviet Government also desired normalization and improvement of relations.

From Molotov's whole attitude it was evident that the Soviet

<sup>6</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "presumably means: 'a matter of'"; the Moscow draft (127/69522-27) confirms this emendation.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 722, footnote 7.

<sup>8</sup> The Moscow draft reads: "present" [*gegenwärtigen*].

Government are, admittedly, increasingly prepared for improvement in German-Soviet relations, although the old mistrust of Germany persists. My general impression is that the Soviet Government are at present determined to conclude an agreement with Britain and France, if they fulfil all Soviet wishes. Negotiations, however, may still last a long time yet, especially since mistrust of Britain is also great. I believe that my statements made an impression on Molotov; it will, nevertheless, require considerable effort on our part to cause a reversal in the Soviet Government's course.<sup>9</sup>

SCHULENBURG

<sup>9</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XII, No. 780.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On August 3, according to a record by Sir Horace Wilson (see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 533), he had a conversation with Dirksen on questions which had been the subject of his previous conversation with Wohlthat (see documents Nos. 716 and 746, footnote 11), and on the question of possible negotiations on an Anglo-German settlement. No record by Dirksen of this conversation has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives but, see the *Dirksen Papers* (Moscow), No. 24.]

## No. 767

1570/380060-61

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in France*

Telegram

No. 350

BERLIN, August 4, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

For the Ambassador personally.

Though, as also conveyed to [*sic* ?by] M. Daladier, according to your telegram No. 375,<sup>2</sup> a valid expulsion order against Herr Abetz has not been made, he has now been refused entry into France on the French frontier at Basle. The Foreign Minister requests you to make a direct approach at once either to M. Daladier again, or, if you prefer, to M. Bonnet, in order to make clear whether the French Government really desire to keep Abetz out of French territory or not. The present attitude of the French authorities is incomprehensible to us. Either no expulsion order has been issued, in which case Abetz cannot be refused entry if he has a valid visa, or else the French authorities regard the order as having actually been issued (as, surprisingly, is stated also in your Note A 3304<sup>3</sup> handed to M. Daladier, which I also

<sup>1</sup> The hour of despatch is not recorded.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 690.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

ask you to explain),<sup>4</sup> but in that case such procedure is in clear contradiction to the statements and promises made to you by the French Minister President. The facts of the case are, that, to safeguard his honour against the slanderous campaign in the Parisian press, Herr Abetz has instituted proceedings.<sup>5</sup> We take it for granted that the French Government will now make it possible for him personally to take the requisite steps in France for conducting these proceedings.

I request you to carry out your *démarche* in such a way that we here know definitely by Tuesday morning whether or not Herr Abetz can now enter France for the purpose stated. As the matter has been pending now for almost four weeks, we cannot await further procrastination on a decision, but would have to regard this as a rejection of our request. Please make it quite clear that we cannot envisage a refusal of our application, which is designed to save the honour of a well-known champion of German-French understanding. If, contrary to our expectations, the decision were taken in the negative, we should have to reserve the right to take such measures as might seem fit to us in view of such an attitude.

Report by telegram.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 407 of Aug. 7 (not printed, 2798/548118), Welzeck replied that his Note A 3304 had been handed over to Daladier before the latter's statement that Abetz had not been expelled but merely asked to leave the country. In Welzeck's view Germany must insist that the French Government revoke the expulsion order which though not served on Abetz, had actually been issued, and permit his entry into France.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 755.

## No. 768

2927/566821-22

### *The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Poland*

BERLIN, August 4, 1939.

Received August 10.

Pol. IV 803 g. Rs.<sup>1</sup> II.

For the Head of Mission personally.

For information.

At the conversations at present being held in Bratislava<sup>2</sup> between the German Military Mission and the Slovak Government, the German side required, among other things, that any contacts with Poland running counter to German interests should be rendered impossible. In order to meet this demand the following was requested in particular:

- a) Strict control of the Slovak-Polish frontier.
- b) Removal of unreliable elements from the Slovak Frontier Control

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<sup>1</sup> Pol. IV 803 g. Rs. has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 554, 611, 667, 696 and 747.

Service and their replacement by reliable personnel under military supervision.

c) Prevention of the influx [of volunteers] into the Czech Legions.

d) Cessation and rigid suppression of Polish anti-German propaganda, and

e) of Polish espionage.

f) Deportation of the Czech General Snejdarek to the Protectorate should he still be in Slovak State territory.

Furthermore the German side demanded that the former Minister Sidor,<sup>3</sup> well known for his pro-Polish attitude, should be made to withdraw from the political scene for good; at the same time it was stated, however, that sending Sidor as Minister to the Vatican was, for the time being, regarded as sufficient guarantee of his removal from political spheres of influence.

The Slovak Government, who, according to reports from the Legation in Bratislava, are at the moment not very pro-Polish, have promised to meet these demands.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>3</sup> Karol Sidor, Slovak Minister of the Interior, March-April 1939. He presented his letters of credence as Minister to the Holy See on July 7, 1939.

## No. 769

259/169735-86

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 609

BERLIN, August 4, 1939.

The British Ambassador called on me today about current routine matters.<sup>1</sup> When he began to talk of the general situation, I told him that the Diplomatic Corps were always given to exaggeration. Four weeks ago they had constantly talked of war, now they had gone over to the other extreme. As long as the Poles had not become reasonable, it was really not possible to talk of the situation becoming easier.

To this Henderson said he felt himself free from such vacillations; he could still see four causes from which war might arise.

1) The belief that Britain was intending to wage a preventive war might induce Germany to forestall such intentions;

2) It might be thought in Germany that Britain was so much engaged all over the world, that she would be immobilized in Europe;

3) Incidents which might act like sparks in a powder magazine, and

4) The situation generally becoming so acute over questions of prestige, that no one would any longer be able to control it.

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<sup>1</sup> For Sir Neville Henderson's account of this conversation see *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 559; see also *ibid.*, Nos. 563 and 594.

I did not discuss these cases precisely, but answered briefly and casually:

On 1), Germany was not seeking any quarrels.

On 2), Britain certainly had difficulties all over the world and that this was her own fault. (To this Henderson remarked that at present Germany was rendering great services to Japan. For the object of Britain's Far Eastern policy was precisely to keep her hands completely free for action in Europe.)

On 4), I could hardly believe that any responsible Government wanted war and would passively allow things to drift into a conflict.

Referring to his own fears set out under 4), Henderson then quite briefly touched upon the following idea: he wondered whether some kind of political standstill could not come about so that Europe should not drift into war against the general will. Henderson substantiated this idea by saying that a political truce could perhaps be brought about, extending till about next spring or summer, between Germany and Poland. I replied to Henderson that Britain, through her self-effacement in giving the guarantee to the Poles, had brought about the opposite effect. I quoted, as an example, that, according to a report which had reached me, the Polish representative in Danzig had, only a few days ago, again expressed himself to the League of Nations Commissioner, Professor Burckhardt, in immoderately bellicose terms.<sup>2</sup> I asked Henderson whether he really believed that M. Chodacki would permit himself such fiery language if his head had not been turned by the British guarantee.

The Ambassador did not revert today to the subject he had previously discussed, namely a German-British press truce.<sup>3</sup> Neither did he speak of the other rumours circulating in the Diplomatic Corps of a rapid German-Russian *rapprochement*.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 771.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 671 and 682.

## No. 770

495/23380

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

St.S. No. 610

BERLIN, August 4, 1939.

The British Ambassador told me today that, during the last ten days of August, motor cycle races will be held near Salzburg on a number of days, and there will be twenty British military competitors. Henderson added that he intended going to these races and also visiting an acquaintance (Karl Fürstenberg)<sup>1</sup> in the district there. The

<sup>1</sup> Presumably Prince Karl zu Fürstenberg who resided at Strobl.

Ambassador then discussed the question of whether the press would make up fantastic political stories about his presence at Salzburg. I replied that his presence at Salzburg at an international motor cycle race meeting could hardly be concealed. In conclusion Henderson then said that he did not wish to trouble the Reich Foreign Minister by a visit in Salzburg at all. Much as he would like to call on and talk to the Reich Foreign Minister, he did not wish to bother him.<sup>2</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "If Henderson wants to speak to me, I shall be available here. He should telephone to make arrangements. Ribbentrop." A minute of Aug. 6 (not printed, 495/233359) by Brückmeier shows that Ribbentrop was at that time at Salzburg. A marginal note on this minute reads: "I have today informed Henderson accordingly. W[eizsäcker] 15/8."

## No. 771

147/78924-25

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V*

BERLIN, August 4, 1939.

Consul General von Janson, Danzig, reported this morning by the special telephone line that the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, Professor Burckhardt, had yesterday communicated the following to him:

1) Immediately after his last visit to the Führer at the Obersalzberg, Gauleiter Forster had called on Professor Burckhardt<sup>1</sup> and told him that he had been instructed by the Führer to work for a *détente* and pacification in the Danzig question. Herr Forster had asked M. Burckhardt to use his influence to this end. A few days later Gauleiter Forster repeated these statements and requests to Professor Burckhardt.

2) About two or three days ago, Gauleiter Forster had again called on Professor Burckhardt and requested him to intervene *officially* in the so-called Customs Inspectors dispute.<sup>2</sup> Professor Burckhardt had replied that surely this request did not mean that the League of Nations or the Committee of Three should deal with this matter. Herr Forster had replied that he merely wanted influence to be brought to bear on the *Poles*.

M. Burckhardt had then got in touch with the Polish Representative in Danzig, Chodacki, who had accorded him a very unfriendly reception (probably because of Burckhardt's views on the Customs Inspectors question, which are that the Poles are substantially in the wrong). In this conversation, M. Burckhardt, as agreed with the Gauleiter, had informed M. Chodacki of the Führer's desire for a *détente* in the Danzig

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 693.

<sup>2</sup> See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 503 and 529, from which it appears that Forster made this request on Aug. 1.

question, and had stated that, if Poland did not come round on the Customs Inspectors question, Danzig would take counter measures. At first Chodacki had asked with a smile what counter measures Danzig could take anyway; when Burekhardt had answered that in certain circumstances the Danzig frontier with East Prussia would be opened, he had become grave and said emphatically: "For Poland that means war." He would at once get in touch with Foreign Minister Beck to obtain fresh information. (Chodacki is at present in Warsaw.)

3) Furthermore M. Burekhardt told Herr von Janson that he had proof that Chamberlain was constantly enjoining restraint and moderation on Warsaw in order not to complicate the situation.

4) Gauleiter Forster had told Professor Burekhardt that in the next few days he would again go to the Führer to ask for fresh instructions.<sup>3</sup>

Submitted herewith for information to:

the State Secretary  
the Under State Secretary, Political Department  
the Deputy Director, Political Department  
Senior Counsellor Schliep  
Herr Braun von Stumm

BERGMANN

<sup>3</sup> Handwritten marginal notes: (i) "Senior Counsellor Kordt: As Gauleiter Forster apparently intends in the near future again to seek instructions from the Führer on the opening of the frontier with East Prussia, it is recommended that this should be passed on by telephone to Fuschl. W[eizsäcker] 4/8." (ii) "Telephoned to Salzburg 5/8 12.00 midday."

## No. 772

695/260362

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 5, 1939.

W 1293 g.

Astakhov, the Soviet Chargé d'Affaires, called on me at 12 noon today to inform me of Molotov's answer to the questions which I put to him the day before yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

1) The Soviet Government were ready, and desirous of continuing the conversations with us on the improvement and development of our relations.

2) The Soviet Government regarded the conclusion of the credit agreement as the first important stage in this direction.

Astakhov said that the above was the substance of his instructions and added the following: He would be at our disposal at any time to receive the German views. When I asked him whether, for the purpose

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 761.

of a conversation with me, he had any authority other than that for merely receiving the German views, he replied in the negative but said he thought that with this attitude of Molotov's, of which he had just informed me, a further step forward had been taken. He described the questions to be discussed between Germany and Russia as urgent and serious.

Astakhov then asked what our impressions were of the Molotov-Schulenburg conversation.<sup>2</sup> I replied that this conversation had been too much concerned with the past. We should really have to stop doing this if we wanted to discuss the future. Astakhov replied that this was the first time that Molotov had discussed these matters, and that from information received he had the impression that the Molotov-Schulenburg conversation had ended on a positive note.

I told Astakhov that I would pass on his statements and I left it that I may revert to the subject in the next few days.

SCHNURRE

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 766.

## No. 773

1724/401064-67

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P. 24

WARSAW, August 5, 1939.

Received August 7.

Pol. V 8734.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Polish attitude to events in Danzig.

The latest phase of the controversy over the Polish Customs Inspectors in Danzig, with which the "Amada" case and other differences on Customs policy between Poland and Danzig are also connected, was at first passed over in silence by the Polish Government press; whilst in the opposition press, as well as in some of the gutter press, which did report it, this was done without sensational headlines.

Not until Friday, August 4, did a few morning papers publish inspired comment about the present situation in Danzig; among them *Kurjer Poranny*, which is close to the Government, adopted a particularly sharp tone. It was there stated, *inter alia*, that the measures adopted by the Danzig Senate against the Polish Customs Inspectors aimed at curtailing Poland's rights; Poland would never tolerate that; a further declaration [*sic* ?restriction] of the duties of Polish Customs officials would result in a vigorous reaction by the Polish Government; as to the rumours that the Danzig Senate intended to remove the Customs frontier with East Prussia, this was obviously a new



*ballon d'essai*. Danzig would presumably reflect seriously before deciding on such a step. For Poland would resist with all her might any attempt to create *faits accomplis*. Moreover it was quite clearly seen on the Polish side that such *faits accomplis* were intended to help German propaganda abroad to prove that, now that Danzig had in effect been incorporated, it was not worth while to wage war merely for appearance's sake. Such German speculations, however, were wrong, since the united front of Poland and her allies was unshakeable; the decision in the Danzig question, however, rested with Poland.

Statements in this morning's Government press, again clearly inspired, only mention the controversy regarding the Polish Customs Inspectors and attempt to refute the Danzig view on this question, while the possibility of opening the Customs frontier between Danzig and East Prussia is not mentioned in the semi-official Polish press. On the question of Customs Inspectors it is stated that the Polish Government would be prepared for talks, provided the Danzig Senate first guaranteed the Customs Inspectors the free exercise of their control functions.

Government circles do not appear to be nervous. Also, in conversations with diplomats during the last few days, M. Beck, if he mentioned the Danzig events at all, only dealt with them quite calmly, even though he described the general situation as serious. I have gathered an interesting point from a conversation which took place between Under State Secretary Arciszewski and the British Ambassador,<sup>1</sup> in the presence of a neutral diplomat. In this conversation, the British Ambassador is said to have enquired with interest whether Poland had laid down a definite line, beyond which any giving way on the Danzig issue would be out of the question. Arciszewski had replied to this that such a line did indeed exist, but it was known only to the President of the State, the Marshal<sup>2</sup> and M. Beck who had drawn it up. On being asked by the British Ambassador whether the opening of the Customs frontier between Danzig and East Prussia could still be accepted by Poland, Arciszewski had answered that, as far as he had knowledge of the above line, such action already went a good way beyond it. Apart from its actual substance, this conversation is of interest in that obviously no agreement has been reached between Poland and Britain on the question as to when Poland's independence is to be regarded as threatened.<sup>3</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>1</sup> Sir Howard Kennard. This conversation took place on Aug. 2. See *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 519.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Marshal Smigly-Rydz.

<sup>3</sup> This document is initialled by Ribbentrop and Weizsäcker.

## No. 774

97/108469-70

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, August 5, 1939.

[e.o. Pol. V 8442.]<sup>1</sup>

Vice Consul von Grolman of the Consulate General, Danzig, has just informed me of the following by telephone:

The Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig, Chodacki, last night at 12 o'clock notified the President of the Danzig Senate, Greiser, by telephone of the imminent despatch of a new Note in the so-called Customs Inspectors dispute. The Note was sent early this morning to the Senate by the Polish Diplomatic Representation; it is enclosed herewith in translation.

The Consulate General has been informed by the Director of the Foreign Department of the Danzig Senate, Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher, as well as by the Director of the Danzig State Customs Authority, President Dr. Kunst, that the Senate, in view of the new Polish Note, had temporarily suspended the execution of the instructions issued a few days ago to the Danzig State Customs Authority, no longer to recognize the so-called Polish frontier guards as Customs Inspectors as from August 6, 1939. A final decision was not to be made until after Gauleiter Forster had obtained new instructions in the matter from the Führer.

Senate President Greiser also intended to speak to Chodacki on the matter again on Monday, August 7.

Forwarded for information to:

The State Secretary  
Under State Secretary, Political Department  
Under State Secretary, Legal Department  
Deputy Director Political Department  
Senior Counsellor Schliep  
Minister Braun von Stumm  
Kult. Spez.

BERGMANN

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (7693/E548481-82).

[Enclosure]

*Translation*

DANZIG, August 4, 1939.

To the President of the Senate of the Free City of Danzig, Herr Arthur Greiser, Danzig.

I have learned that the local Danzig Customs Authorities at the

frontier posts between the Free City of Danzig and East Prussia have approached the Polish Customs Inspectors with a statement, unexampled of its kind, that the Danzig administrative authorities intend, from 7 a.m. on August 6, to resist a certain section of the Polish Inspectors in the performance of their control functions, which functions arise out of the rights of the Polish Government on the Customs frontier. I am convinced that this action of the local authorities is either due to a misunderstanding or to a false interpretation of the instructions of the Senate of the Free City of Danzig.

I do not doubt that you, Mr. President of the Senate, have no doubts that such an infringement of the fundamental rights of Poland would under no pretext be tolerated by the Polish Government.

I await your answer assuring me that you have issued orders which cancel the action of your subordinates, at the latest by 6 p.m. on August 5.

In view of the fact that the above-mentioned action has taken place at a number of frontier posts, I am compelled to warn you, Mr. President of the Senate, that all Polish Customs Inspectors have received the order to carry out their duties in uniform and with arms on August 6, 1939 and the following days at all points on the frontier which they regard as necessary for the control. All attempts to hamper them in the performance of their duties, all attacks or intervention by the police authorities will be regarded as acts of violence against officials of the Polish State during the performance of their duties.

Should the above-mentioned abuses take place the Polish Government will retaliate without delay against the Free City, and the responsibility for this will fall exclusively on the Senate of the Free City.

I hope to receive a satisfactory explanation by the time stated.

CHODACKI

Diplomatic Representative of the Polish Republic.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In reply to this Note Greiser, according to a Bergmann memorandum of Aug. 10 (not printed, 7693/E543483) "at first stated orally that no order of the kind alleged by the Polish authorities had been given to the Danzig Customs authorities. Herr Greiser gave an evasive negative reply to the demand by the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig, Chodacki, that this should be confirmed at once in writing to the Polish Representation. M. Chodacki then transmitted to Herr Greiser a second Note dated Aug. 4, but not presented until Aug. 5."

This second Polish Note of Aug. 4 (7693/E548484) read as follows: "Mr. President of the Senate: The Polish Government express their surprise that the Senate has encountered technical difficulties in answering such a simple matter. In the interests of avoiding the threatened consequences, I note in the meantime that there will be no acts of violence against our Customs Inspectors and that they will be able to carry out their functions in the normal way. I confirm, however, that the warnings contained in my note of Aug. 4-11:40 p.m. remain in force. I avail etc., Chodacki."

See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Nos. 550, 558, 560, 565 and 568; the *French Yellow Book*, No. 181; and the *Polish White Book*, Nos. 81, 82 and 83.

## No. 775

34/23903

*The Ambassador in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

Moscow, August 7, 1939—2:08 p.m.

No. 162 of August 7

Received August 7—3:30 p.m.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 164,<sup>1</sup> 165<sup>2</sup> and 166<sup>3</sup> of August 3.

I. I visited Potemkin today on current routine matters. On this occasion Potemkin also spoke about the conversations of the Reich Foreign Minister and of Schnurre with Astakhov and mentioned that Astakhov already has general instructions to continue conversations and that he will now receive wider instructions.

II. The British-French Military Missions will arrive at Leningrad on August 10. Including orderlies, there are nineteen British, eleven French.

SCHULENBURG

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 759.<sup>2</sup> Document No. 758.<sup>3</sup> Document No. 760.

## No. 776

B18/B003027

*The Minister in Finland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 111 of August 7

HELSINKI, August 7, 1939—5:35 p.m.

Received August 7—8:35 p.m.

1. The Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> told me Molotov had informed the Finnish Minister in Moscow<sup>2</sup> that Russia had no designs on Finland. Russia must, however, protect herself against a lightning German attack on Leningrad. Molotov had then explained Russia's interest in the Aaland Islands, but had not spoken of the islands in the Gulf of Finland, which, in the last few weeks, had not been mentioned by the Russians any more.

2. The Foreign Minister has the impression that the Russians are starting propaganda against an alleged Finnish naval base in Petsamo.

BLÜCHER

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<sup>1</sup> Elias Erkko.<sup>2</sup> N. R. Idman.

## No. 777

2180/471700-01

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 7, 1939.

St.S. No. 615

The Italian Ambassador called on me this morning to communicate the following; Ciano had telephoned instructions to him early today as follows:

1. Mussolini had come to the conclusion that it would be best if the meeting with the Führer, which was after all an event of some importance, did not take place until all the conditions necessary for assessing the situation existed. This would however not be the case until the outcome of the Anglo-Russian negotiations could be assessed, i.e., until it was known whether the tripartite alliance between the Western Powers and Russia would come into being or not. By this Mussolini, of course, did not wish to give any impression that he was now trying somehow to evade the meeting.

2. The Duce considered it necessary, however, that the two Foreign Ministers should have talks as soon as at all possible. Ciano was leaving the choice of place for these entirely to the Reich Foreign Minister. He would also be quite willing to come to Salzburg, or another place in South Germany such as Innsbruck, or else to a place in Italy. But Ciano presupposed that the meeting would be a really private one without any elaborate machinery or great prominence in the press.

The subject of the Foreign Ministers' talk should merely be a discussion of the political situation.

Attolico added that Ciano wished to see him—Attolico—before his talk with the Reich Foreign Minister and he hinted, probably of his own accord, that the simplest way would be a visit by Ciano to Salzburg or Fuschl.

I promised Attolico that I would pass this on to the Foreign Minister at once.

Herewith to the Reich Foreign Minister.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Weizsäcker sent a copy of this document to Mackensen with a personal letter dated Aug. 7 (not printed; see document No. 718, footnote 4) who has noted in the margin: "Is to take place on 11.8 at Salzburg".

## No. 778

270/178533-34

*State Secretary Weizsäcker to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BERLIN, August 7, 1939.

Received August 11.

DEAR COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG: My best thanks for your letter of July 14<sup>1</sup> and for the suggestions contained therein. I also brought your letter to the attention of the Reich Foreign Minister.

The Soviet-Russian Ambassador and the members of the Embassy staff here have generally been invited to all functions for which invitations are extended to the entire Diplomatic Corps. So far these invitations have in general not been accepted, but the Russian Counsellor of Embassy was present recently at the Day of German Art at Munich.<sup>2</sup> This appearance was all the more remarkable as, apart from him, only a few Heads of Missions had accepted the invitation.

According to information from the High Command of the Wehrmacht the Assistant Russian Military Attaché who acts as Military Attaché here is likewise invited to all general functions and has regularly accepted the invitations.

As to the personal intercourse of all grades of officials with members of the Russian Embassy, this is regulated by the directive of which you are aware,<sup>3</sup> which was issued by the Foreign Minister and stipulates that all intercourse be restricted to the minimum required officially. I hardly think that the time has yet come to recommend to the Foreign Minister the simple cancellation of this directive, but in future relaxation should take place in particular cases, each of which should be decided individually. I hope that by this we have taken the first step along the lines which you have in mind towards easing relations with the Soviet Russian Embassy here, and that in time this will have a stimulating effect on the difficult position in Moscow.

With sincere greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Presumably a reference to the letter of July 10 (document No. 648).

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 727.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

## No. 779

276/178513-17

*Ambassador Schulenburg to Senior Counsellor Schliep*

Moscow, August 7, 1939.

DEAR HERR SCHLIEP: Sincerest thanks for your letter of the 2nd of this month and its interesting enclosure.<sup>1</sup>

As a matter of fact, I have in the meantime received the instructions by telegram to attend the Party Rally.<sup>2</sup> On September 1, I am to travel in the new grey uniform from Berlin to Nuremberg with the other gentlemen of the Foreign Ministry. That means that I must be in Berlin on August 27 at the latest: a final fitting and the purchase of a number of accessories are unavoidable.

You know from our telegram<sup>3</sup> that the political negotiations with the British and the French have been interrupted for the time being. Mr. Strang left by air this morning for London, where a great quantity of work has allegedly accumulated for him. At the end of the week the British and French officers will arrive. The British military men here also regard the prospects of the impending military negotiations with considerable scepticism. Among the members of the British Military Mission is the former Air Attaché in Moscow, Collier.<sup>4</sup> Collier is a very sober and quiet man and knows Soviet conditions well. Moreover he was in Archangel at the time of the intervention. The fact that he is being sent is welcomed by the British here, since it is thought he will not be taken in by the Soviets and knows their methods of negotiation.

Concerning the political negotiations up to now we hear that throughout M. Molotov sat there stiff and dumb [*steif und stumm*]. [He was very different towards Hilger and me the other day: very communicative and amiable.]<sup>5</sup> He hardly ever opened his mouth, and if he did it was to utter only the brief remarks: "Your statements do not appear to me entirely satisfactory. I shall inform my Government." The British and the French Ambassadors are both said to be completely exhausted and glad that they now have a break ahead of them. The Frenchman said to one of my informants, "Thank God that that fellow [Molotov]<sup>5</sup> will not participate in the military negotiations!"

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (276/178510-11). In this letter was enclosed a copy of document No. 753.

<sup>2</sup> A circular, giving these instructions, had been sent on July 31 (not printed, 8279/E588253-56).

<sup>3</sup> Telegram No. 161 of Aug. 7 (not printed, 103/111515) which reported that in view of the impending arrival of the Military Missions there was a temporary lull in the diplomatic negotiations, which explained Strang's departure.

<sup>4</sup> Wing Commander Alfred Conrad Collier, Air Attaché at Moscow 1934-1937.

<sup>5</sup> The words in square brackets are added by hand on Schulenburg's file copy, here printed.

Regarding my conversations with Molotov you are, of course, informed. Still, I believe that we have really given the Soviets something to think about. At every word and at every step one can sense the great distrust towards us. That this is so, we have known for a long time. The unfortunate part of it is that the mistrust of such people is very easily kindled and can only be allayed slowly and with difficulty.

I recently wrote you<sup>6</sup> of the alleged fisticuffs between the Turkish Ambassador, Apaydin,<sup>7</sup> who left here very suddenly, and his Military Attaché.<sup>8</sup> At that time I didn't believe this story but it seems to be correct. I hear now on good authority that the bout even took place before witnesses. At first the Military Attaché was also recalled, but then this disciplinary measure was withdrawn, probably so as not to give any fresh impetus to the rumours about the quarrel circulating here.

My old acquaintance Minister Idman, who is at present in charge of the Finnish Legation here, told me that when he called on Molotov the latter expressed himself as very dissatisfied over the hostile attitude of the Finnish press towards Russia. Idman said he replied that the Finnish press was free to write what it wished and if it printed anti-Soviet articles, the Soviet Union had probably given occasion for them.

The Danish Minister<sup>9</sup> here only recently made his first call on Molotov. The Minister President brought up with the Minister the question of the German-Danish Non-Aggression Treaty. He took note of, but made no comment on, the Minister's statement that Denmark was very satisfied with the conclusion of the pact.

In conversations with Molotov, the Ministers of Latvia and Estonia<sup>10</sup> here characterized the German Non-Aggression Treaties as safeguards for peace and remarked that the conclusion of the Treaties had been entirely natural, since Latvia and Estonia also had similar non-aggression treaties with the Soviet Union. Molotov, however, took the position that these treaties indicated an inclination towards Germany and he could not be dissuaded from this view.

The Estonian Chargé d'Affaires here,<sup>11</sup> when talking about the attitude of the Soviets towards the Baltic question, spoke of the possibility of Germany guaranteeing the independence of Latvia and Estonia as she had that of Belgium.<sup>12</sup> I am of the opinion that the Soviets now no longer want such a guarantee to be given by us.

General Köstring,<sup>13</sup> who has gone to Berlin for a few days, intended to look you up and give you the news from here. I hope he has done so. We are very curious to know what news he will bring us from

<sup>6</sup> In a letter of July 20 (not printed); see document No. 729, footnote 7.

<sup>7</sup> Zekâi Apaydin, Turkish Ambassador in the Soviet Union, July 1935-August 1939.

<sup>8</sup> Lieut.-Col. B. Türkmen, Military and Air Attaché.

<sup>9</sup> L. B. Bolt-Jørgensen, 1938-1941.

<sup>10</sup> Frīcis Kotziņš and Auguste Rei.

<sup>11</sup> Presumably V. Ojansoon, Counsellor of Legation.

<sup>12</sup> See also document No. 608.

<sup>13</sup> Lieut.-Gen. Ernst Köstring, Military Attaché at Moscow.



Berlin. We are just as eagerly awaiting the arrival of Herr von Tippelskirch<sup>14</sup> who intends to come on Friday next.

I hope the three German representatives who are to visit the Agricultural Exhibition here at the invitation of the Soviet Government<sup>15</sup> will arrive soon. The exhibition is really very much worth seeing (amazingly grandiose). Should not the Soviet Government be invited to the Eastern Fair at Königsberg? Obviously it is too late for the Soviet Union to participate and send exhibits to the Fair; however, in return for the invitation to the Agricultural Exhibition some Soviet representatives could at least be invited to visit the Fair.

Here the rather terrific heat continues; I like it better than the eternal rain and mud.

With warmest regards to your wife, with greetings to you and with Heil Hitler! I remain, dear Herr Schliep,

Yours etc.,

COUNT VON DER SCHULENBURG

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<sup>14</sup> On his return from leave, see document No. 661.

<sup>15</sup> See also document No. 757.

## No. 780

799/273769

### *The President of the Danzig Senate to the Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig<sup>1</sup>*

DANZIG, August 7, 1939.

MR. MINISTER: In reply to your two communications dated August 4, the second of which was delivered on August 5,<sup>2</sup> I must express to you my astonishment that you have taken a completely unauthenticated rumour as an occasion to send the Danzig Government a short term ultimatum from the Polish Government, and at this time of political unrest to conjure up unnecessary dangers, the consequences of which can cause untold harm. The sudden order of the Polish Government that *all* Polish Customs Inspectors must perform their duties in uniform and armed is a violation of the treaty agreements and can only be regarded as deliberate provocation intended to create incidents and acts of violence of the most objectionable kind.

According to enquiries made by me in the meantime, it is established, as I informed you at once by telephone on Saturday morning August 5, that no authority, and particularly no office of the State Customs Office

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<sup>1</sup> Schliep circulated this copy in the Foreign Ministry under cover of a minute dated Aug. 7 (not printed, 799/273768). See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, Nos. 575 and 577; the *Polish White Book*, No. 84; and the *French Yellow Book*, Nos. 183 and 189.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 774 and footnote 2 thereto.

of the Free City of Danzig, has issued an order stating that the Danzig administrative authorities must, from August 6 at 7 a.m., resist a certain section of the Polish Customs Inspectors in the performance of their control functions. Apart from this, I draw attention to my communication of June 3, 1939<sup>3</sup> in which I then already laid down precisely the relations of the Danzig Customs officials with the Polish Customs Inspectors on the frontier.

The Danzig Government protest most strongly against the reprisals which the Polish Government threaten, and which they regard as an unwarrantable threat, the consequences of which will fall only upon the Polish Government.

I avail, etc.,

GREISER

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<sup>3</sup> Document No. 471.

## No. 781

2422/511779-84

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Press Department*

[BERLIN] August 10, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Berlin visit of the American Postmaster General, Farley,<sup>2</sup> and further conversations with R. B. Strassburger,<sup>3</sup> August 4-7, 1939.

Farley had travelled from New York through to Hamburg direct. Any particularly Germanophile gesture, which this at first appeared to be, he had not intended. It appeared to him merely the shortest way to Warsaw. Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Strassburger joined him at Le Havre. St[rassburger] is a politically influential American of Pennsylvania German origin, who has been well known to me for years. Farley had written to him to Paris in June that he would like to meet him in Europe. Farley controls the Democratic Party organization. He is well liked by the officials of his Party in the whole country, and Strassburger is out to create an open breach between him and Roosevelt and thereby fan the opposition against Roosevelt within the Democratic Party. Apart from his salary as Postmaster General (\$15,000 a year) Farley has no financial means. He is also said not to have enriched himself unjustly in his post. St[rassburger] offered Farley a post with a salary of \$50,000 a year, in order to make the breach with Roosevelt easier for him. Farley, after a short time for reflection, declined, so he was not then ready to break away from Roosevelt. Farley probably feels it to be in some way his duty to follow his chief.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here, at the time of the visit, for the convenience of the reader.

<sup>2</sup> James A. Farley, United States Postmaster General, Mar. 1933-Aug. 1940.

<sup>3</sup> Ralph Beaver Strassburger, American publisher and author.

Whether this would hold good for a third term is not yet clear. Farley is the type of politician who has grown up in New York City politics. So far he makes compromises in all directions, and does not appear, up to the present, to be prepared to join openly the non-Jewish wing of the Democratic Party. St[rassburger] supports Farley with the intention of possibly making him a candidate for the Presidency. St[rassburger] and his political friends intend at the next year's Democratic Party Convention to propose Garner,<sup>4</sup> Hull and Farley as candidates in order to unite the supporters of Garner and Hull in favour of the younger Farley. Farley would like to have St[rassburger]'s political support in Pennsylvania. St[rassburger] wished to sound F[arley] on the latest state of his political plans, hence the journey together from Le Havre. St[rassburger] was thus for me the best go-between.

Farley was very much impressed by the throbbing life of Hamburg. Here in Berlin, Farley was immediately collared by the American Embassy, who at once drew up a programme covering the whole of his time here.

At a press conference shortly after his arrival on Friday, August 4, Farley told a German press representative (Dr. Clauss, *D[eu]tsche A[llgemeine] Z[eitung]*) that here in Berlin he knew only Ministerialdirektor Orth,<sup>5</sup> and that he would be pleased to see him again. As official visits to German authorities—apart from a courtesy visit to the Reich Minister of Posts<sup>6</sup>—were not his intention, I thought it advisable first to use Ministerialdirektor (retired) Orth as a suitable link. I visited Herr Orth that very Friday evening, in order first of all to obtain a personal impression of him. Orth at once telephoned Farley, who, however, was not in, as he was a guest of the American Chargé d'Affaires.<sup>7</sup> Next morning Farley telephoned Orth. Orth invited him to a tour of Berlin. Farley answered evasively and invited Herr Orth to come and see him in his hotel. There Orth repeated his invitation, whereupon Farley said that he was already engaged for the rest of the day with the American Embassy.

My attempt, with the help of Strassburger, to get Farley away from the American Embassy also failed. Farley hinted to St[rassburger] that he must remain with the Embassy from political considerations.

The sightseeing programme for Farley appeared to have been drawn up particularly by the American Counsellor, Geist.<sup>8</sup> St[rassburger] tried to get F[arley] away from Geist in particular, but without success. Farley appeared for some reason not to be able to refuse Geist.

<sup>4</sup> John Nance Garner, Vice-President of the United States, 1933-1940.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Orth, formerly of the Reich Ministry of Posts.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Wilhelm Ohnesorge.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander C. Kirk.

<sup>8</sup> R. H. Geist, First Secretary at the American Embassy.

St[rassburger] had to be very careful in order to avoid appearing as too pro-German and consequently the conversation becoming cautious in his presence.

Without consulting Farley, Geist had arranged an excursion for Saturday lunch and afternoon. The main objective of this sole sightseeing trip was a concentration camp. To this the St[rassburger]s were also invited but declined, and expressed to me very plainly their indignation at this lack of taste. I learned that they only drove around the outside of a "concentration camp".

Following this sightseeing trip, a reception for Farley was held at the residence of Kirk, the American Chargé d'Affaires, to which the press was invited. It was evident that Farley was to be appropriately briefed by Geist for a press interview. Geist whispered to the *New York Times* correspondent, Tolischus (overheard by St[rassburger]): "Everything went off well". At the press conference, however, Farley declined to make any comment for the American press. Privately, Farley said that he was very much impressed by Germany. The National Socialist Reich was for him a much more important matter than he had previously believed, but the concentration camps were really a terrible thing.

Exactly as during the visit of the proprietor of the *New York Daily News*, Joseph Patterson, it has become evident in this case also that we have hardly any possibility of influencing the visiting programme of important Americans passing through Berlin as long as we do not cultivate social contacts with members of the American Embassy. These important persons will again and again turn to their Embassy, who on their part obviously bring them into contact only with an anti-German clique. In any case I have the impression that our voluntary absence is made full use of by our opponents.

Strassburger's impression from conversations with members of the Embassy: Kirk decent, Geist uncongenial and hostile. On the last day of his visit (August 7) St[rassburger] hinted that he had the impression that the American Embassy here had a rather good "net of listening posts". In spite of his careful behaviour he had the feeling that the Embassy were already mistrustful of him. He said he suspected that Geist had something to do with this information service.

Farley obtained an unfavourable impression of Kirk and expressed himself to the effect that Kirk was timid. He regarded Geist, however, as a capable official.

St[rassburger] took the opportunity of speaking to Farley about the absence of an American ambassador<sup>9</sup> and of comparing the American attitude with that of Britain and France in drastic terms. Farley was

<sup>9</sup> On Nov. 14, 1938, the American Ambassador, Hugh R. Wilson, was recalled to the United States for consultation and did not return to his post. See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 504.

obviously convinced of the inadequacy of the present situation and said that on his return he would report to that effect to Roosevelt.

For the rest Farley had seen little of Germany. He was surprised when Mr. and Mrs. St[rassburger] drew his attention to various things which had favourably impressed them. Farley had not noticed any of these things.

In Poland, Farley will stay with Anthony Biddle, the American Ambassador there and afterwards will be a guest in the house of the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Count Potocki. St[rassburger] did not think that any special intentions in the field of foreign policy were connected with the visit to Poland. It is rather to be assumed that the visit to Biddle has a background of domestic politics. Biddle comes from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The State of Pennsylvania, which in 1936 gave a majority to the Democratic Party, was won back by the Republicans in 1938. It is important for the success of the Democrats at the Presidential Election next year that the Democratic Party should regain a majority in Pennsylvania. This will probably be discussed with Biddle and Farley will try to ensure Biddle's active support. In case of success, Biddle would be given a better Ambassador's post (London for example). St[rassburger] regards Biddle as quite insignificant, pro-British, and moreover as conforming entirely to the wishes of the State Department. St[rassburger] and Biddle are both from Philadelphia.

St[rassburger] regards the United States Ambassador in Paris, the half-Jew Bullitt, as the chief American warmonger in Europe. St[rassburger] is collecting material prejudicial to Bullitt which he intends to use in the election campaign next year. (Amongst other things Bullitt pays for his residence near Paris only \$600 a year rent.)

Should the breach between Roosevelt and Farley, which St[rassburger] is hoping for, take place in the course of the coming election campaign, I could make close contact with Farley at any time. St[rassburger] stated during the conversations that he would be ready to do anything which would serve the German cause.

SALLET

## No. 782

96/107927-35

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, August 7, 1939.

Under State Secretary von Jagwitz of the Reich Ministry of Economics and I went into the question of how Turkey's political change of course can be countered in the economic field, starting from the principle that our economic relations with Turkey must be restricted to

what is absolutely necessary. Herr von Jagwitz had with him a memorandum which had already been approved by the Reich Minister of Economics, and had been drawn up for a report by Reich Minister Funk to the Führer.

I. *The Position.* Three inter-related issues are involved:

(a) Regulation of current trade and payments; the existing agreements expire on August 31, 1939.<sup>1</sup>

(b) Ratification of the Credit Agreement of January 16,<sup>2</sup> 1939.

(c) Continuation of contracts concluded for the supply of war material.

(a) *Current trade*

German-Turkish trade has developed particularly well in recent years and has roughly quadrupled since 1933. It amounts at present to about 150 million Reichsmark a year in either direction. The prospects for a continuance of this upward trend are favourable: Turkey is only in the initial stage of her economic development, 80 per cent of all industrial plants have been constructed with German material and with the assistance of German experts, about 2,000 Germans are engaged in official and semi-official posts alone.

A review of the structure of German-Turkish trade in 1938 is enclosed (annex 1).<sup>3</sup> According to this, our imports from Turkey fell into three groups: first group, vital raw materials, 32.6 million Reichsmark=29 per cent; second group, important goods which, however, could be dispensed with if necessary, 48.9 million Reichsmark=43 per cent (this includes 23 million Reichsmark for tobacco); third group, goods which could easily be dispensed with, 32.1 million Reichsmark=28 per cent.

The first group of vital raw materials consists of chrome ore, feeding stuffs, timber, raw hides, and textile raw materials, in particular wool, mohair, cotton. These imports have increased in the current year compared with 1938; they probably now constitute some 30-35 per cent of our total imports from Turkey. Regarding the most important of these raw materials, chrome ore, which is absolutely essential for the manufacture of steel for armaments, imports have almost doubled since the present trade agreement came into force, thus meeting more than half our total requirements in this ore. The loss of raw material imports from Turkey could not be borne at present without grievous injury to the German economy. The possibility of obtaining these raw materials elsewhere was thoroughly studied, but for reasons given in detail in annex 1, this is not feasible, because the possibilities of import from other countries through the clearing arrange-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 454.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (96/107936-40).

ments have already been exploited to the utmost, while the necessary funds for purchases from hard currency countries are not available.

Germany could without difficulty dispense with goods in group 3, neither would the loss of goods in group 2 cause any serious disturbance. About 70 per cent of the German imports from Turkey are therefore not in themselves vitally necessary for Germany. Nevertheless there are weighty considerations against their being strangled, which are set out below.

On the other hand Greater Germany is Turkey's most important market, taking over 50 per cent of her exports. The loss of this profitable trading partner would in the long run affect Turkey acutely, the more so as Germany has bought her products at prices higher than in the world markets, and in this way has given a decisive impetus to her (Turkey's) economy. Turkey's new political friends could probably, for a time, create for her an equilibrium by artificial means (supporting purchases, loans, credits) but not a lasting substitute on a natural economic basis.

Turkey is therefore greatly interested in the maintenance and further development of all trade with Germany and, consequently, in the prolongation of the present trade agreement. Germany is interested first and foremost in the continued import of vital raw materials but also, in the second place, in the maintenance of exports from Turkey to such an extent as to enable outstanding claims for goods supplied to be met within the stipulated periods of payment. At present these claims amount to roughly 200 million Reichsmark, which, for want of adequate imports from Turkey to meet them, would be frozen.

#### (b) *Credit Agreement*

For the same reasons for which she is interested in a prolongation of the present Trade Agreement, Turkey is also interested in the entry into force of the Credit Agreement which was to afford her the possibility of buying from us war material to the value of 60 million Reichsmark and industrial products for 90 million Reichsmark against payment in kind. As early as May the Turkish Parliament approved the Credit Agreement, but so far ratification has been held up in the absence of a German decision. The putting into force of the Agreement would mean a considerable expansion in German-Turkish trade and would therefore run counter to the principle of restricting it to what is absolutely necessary. The assumption of further obligations for the delivery of war material would, in the present-day situation, be quite out of the question. Nor have we now any great interest in effecting the deliveries of industrial products under the Credit Agreement which we promised when it was concluded, in order to prevent British industry from gaining a foothold in Turkey, especially as, apart from this, our productive capacity for export is strained to the utmost at present. Although the Credit Agreement would place an obligation on Turkey

to increase considerably her raw material deliveries, it nevertheless appears doubtful whether, in view of her British commitments, she would still be in a position to honour these obligations.

Two industrial contracts to the total value of ten million Reichsmark have, subject to the ratification of the Credit Agreement, already been concluded between German firms and the Turkish Government. Independently of the Credit Agreement, but in accordance with its general provisions, a syndicate headed by Krupp has undertaken the extension of the naval base of Gölcük where, under the contract, work is to begin on August 12, 1939. Germany is interested in the carrying out of these contracts in so far as the German firms concerned would otherwise suffer considerable losses in respect of preparatory work already done, and would, besides, have to encounter serious difficulties regarding a number of old contracts which have not yet been completed. According to a report received from the Embassy in Ankara,<sup>4</sup> the execution of the Gölcük project is not expected to result in an immediate strengthening of Turkish military defensive power, since the construction of the port would not be completed in under four years.

*(c) War material deliveries*

A survey of the still non-completed contracts for war material deliveries to the Turkish Government is enclosed (annex 2).<sup>5</sup> The most important of these are:

1) Four submarines from Krupp, of which the first has already been delivered, the second lies at Kiel ready for delivery, the third and fourth are under construction at Istanbul, the third being 85 per cent and the fourth 65 per cent finished. If we refuse to complete the two submarines the Turks could, with British help, do this without great difficulty. Guarantees of delivery totalling almost twenty million Reichsmark are payable in foreign currency by the Istanbul branch of the Dresdner Bank in case of non-delivery.

2) Twenty 15 cm Krupp guns, three of which have already been delivered.

3) Twelve 21 cm Skoda guns.

4) Six 24 cm Skoda howitzers, two of which have already been delivered.

5) Modern military aircraft, sixty Messerschmidt 109 and eight Heinkel 111.

The further execution of these most important contracts has been suspended by order of the Führer,<sup>6</sup> subject to his final decision. The remaining contracts relate to light artillery material, optical instru-

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (2950/576528-43). This report, A 1334 of June 23, dealt with the future development of German-Turkish economic relations.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 703, enclosure.



ments and tractor vehicles. The sum total of the prices agreed in all the contracts amounts to about 120 million Reichsmark. The relevant guarantees furnished total about 45 million Reichsmark, of which some 25 million Reichsmark would have to be paid in foreign currency. The losses which German firms would suffer in the event of non-delivery owing to forfeited payments and guarantees would be in the neighbourhood of these amounts. Besides this, the Turkish Government could have recourse to the property of these firms in Turkey for damage resulting from non-delivery and not covered by the guarantees, or they could set off their claims for damages against the claims by these firms arising out of earlier deliveries. According to the enclosed survey, the firms' claims prejudiced by such a settlement amount to 44,953,000 Reichsmark and £932,600 sterling. The firms' losses resulting from non-delivery could only be recovered in a small measure by possibly withholding advance payments made by the Turkish Government, totalling roughly 7.6 million Reichsmark and £700,000 sterling, and a possible sale to other countries, or to the Wehrmacht, of war material becoming available through non-delivery to Turkey. The Reich would probably have to compensate the firms for the losses, and, in particular, provide them with the foreign exchange necessary for the guarantees payable in foreign exchange which, in the present foreign exchange position, would not be tolerable.

If these contracts are not to be fulfilled Germany will, consequently, be vitally interested in arriving at an understanding with the Turkish Government on a cancellation of the contracts, in order to prevent the guarantees from maturing and Turkey from raising claims for damages.

Penalties, as provided for in some contracts for overdue delivery, play no part in cases of non-delivery.

## II. *Embassy Report*

Ambassador von Papen has furnished a report on all the relevant questions, which is enclosed herewith as annex 3 and in which the position is described in even greater detail. He stresses that we must naturally retaliate for Turkey's political change of course by the manner of our cooperation in the economic field, but that our own carefully considered economic interests will have to be taken into account. He arrives at the proposal to restrict imports of non-essential goods in group 3, not all at once and abruptly, but automatically by putting a stop to the premiums and by issuing confidential directives. By taking restrictive measures openly against Turkey in the economic field, we should only be playing into our enemies' hands, thereby proving correct the assertion by hostile propaganda, readily believed by many in the Balkan countries, that we were merely pursuing power politics in our economic policy towards South East Europe. He recommends prolongation of the Trade and Payments

agreement and ratification of the Credit Agreement but the suspension of war material deliveries to the extent considered necessary and an amicable understanding on the cancellation of contracts already concluded.

### III. *Views of the Ministry of Economics*

The views of the Minister of Economics as communicated to me by Herr von Jagwitz agree on the whole with those in the Embassy report. He recognized that Turkey should be made to feel in the economic field the consequences of her political change of course, but thought that to restrict economic relations to the absolute minimum would not be fair to important German economic interests. In his view it was at present not so much a question of Turkey but of the British to whom we should be rendering the greatest service if we were to break off economic relations with the Turks, thereby virtually compelling them to throw themselves upon the mercy of the British in the economic field as well. He expressed himself in favour of a prolongation of the Trade and Payments Agreement and strongly emphasized the impossibility of forgoing, at the moment, the supplies of raw materials from Turkey, especially of chrome ore. In his view the description "important goods which, however, could be dispensed with if necessary" does not apply to those goods in group 2 of our imports from Turkey, in particular not to tobacco, rather it should be "important goods which in the present position of supplies could be dispensed with only with great difficulty", since a loss of such imports would lead to factories closing down. If the Credit Agreement could not be ratified owing to the exclusion of war material deliveries which might become necessary, one could, from the German point of view, accept this. Efforts would then have to be made, however, to carry out the projects already begun on the same terms as provided for in the Credit Agreement. Any non-fulfilment of contracts entered into for the supply of war material which might become necessary for political reasons should, in view of our foreign exchange position, be kept to the barest possible minimum. In any case, ways and means would have to be found to prevent Turkey from availing herself of the guarantees. A statement of the German point of view right at the beginning of the negotiations would have to be avoided and an attempt first made to find out the Turkish views on the situation and then to make use of our readiness to prolong the Trade Agreement, in order to induce Turkey to meet us on the question of guarantees and, as far as necessary, also over the Credit Agreement.

### IV. *My own views*

It is undoubtedly true that in our present position we cannot afford the loss of Turkish raw material supplies, in particular of chrome ores.

Herein lies a decisive weakness of our position. We cannot expect the Turks to continue supplying us with these raw materials if we refuse not only to fulfil the contracts for the supply of war material but also to ratify the Credit Agreement and, furthermore, at the same time strangle to a large extent imports of goods not vitally important to us. Realizing this, we are compelled to conclude that we must refrain from openly imposing restrictions by amending the Trade Agreement but rather that we must envisage a prolongation of the Agreement with almost no amendments.

The same conclusion is reached if we consider that only this method offers some prospect of coming to an understanding with the Turks on the questions of guarantee and damages in the event of non-fulfilment of contracts for war material deliveries, which understanding is absolutely necessary since we would otherwise run the risk of very heavy losses, especially in foreign currency.

For both these reasons—whether the other arguments put forward for such a solution are justified or not—I, too, arrive at the suggestion:

a) to prolong the Trade and Payments Agreement, provided a satisfactory settlement on the cancellation of the contracts for war material is brought about. Nevertheless, the imports of non-essential goods in group 3, and as far as possible also of goods in group 2, could be strangled in the "cold way" suggested by the Embassy, provided this does not endanger the imports of raw materials and reduce the payments of German claims.

b) to cancel the contracts for war material deliveries subject to Turkey's renunciation of guarantees and claims for damages, and, as far as possible, cancel all such contracts, but certainly those mentioned above as being the most important.

c) not to ratify the Credit Agreement.

Should it be necessary, in order to achieve satisfactory cancellation of the contracts for war material, to conclude some transactions for industrial supplies on favourable terms (but with the highest possible proportion of raw materials in return), this could be considered. Whether this should also apply to the enlargement of the naval base at Gölçük is difficult to decide; if, in fact, as the Embassy thinks, there are no military objections, I would, for economic reasons, advocate the continuation of this project, too, if necessary; the more so as this would be a particularly effective concession by which to extricate ourselves unscathed from our contracts for war material as such.

d) to postpone our decision as to whether economic relations can be further and openly restricted until such time as the cancellation of the contracts for war material has been carried out, as under point b).

Early instructions would be desirable because a consignment of Diesel motors for the construction of submarines at Istanbul, which

was notified to the Turks for delivery by August 17, was intercepted on the high seas a few days ago, and it would help the negotiations if we could speak to the Turks before the ship arrives at Istanbul without the Diesel motors.

Counsellor of Embassy Kroll from Ankara arrives in Berlin on Wednesday, August 9, to be given final instructions for the negotiations. For submission to the State Secretary for the Foreign Minister.

WIEHL

[EDITORS' NOTE: Birger Dahlerus, a Swedish industrialist with considerable knowledge of, and influential connections in, Great Britain and Germany, started, at the beginning of July, 1939, on the self-appointed mission of bringing about an understanding between the two countries in the hope of preventing war. For Dahlerus' endeavours, in particular as intermediary between London and Berlin, and his eventual failure, see his book *The Last Attempt* (London, 1947) and his evidence before the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg (vol. IX, pp. 457-491 of the *Trial of the Major War Criminals*). See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, Appendix IV, and vol. VII, *passim*. Little trace of Dahlerus' activities has been found in the German Foreign Ministry's archives, but see document No. 783.]

## No. 783

5842/E382013-21

### UNSIGNED MEMORANDUM<sup>1</sup>

1. This Memorandum is intended to give, to the best of our knowledge, as true a picture as possible of public opinion in Great Britain. Beyond this, however, it is also intended to show the effect and significance of this public opinion.

<sup>1</sup> This document comes from a file belonging to Göring's Staff Office. It is filed with three pages of scribbled jottings (5482/E382010-12) and a handwritten cover note (5482/E382009) which reads: "Fräulein Limberger: with a request to put this memorandum with the secret files. I think this is a memorandum which was given to the Field Marshal by the Englishmen at the conversations at Sönke Nissen Koog." Initialed "S. 17.8.39." The reference is to a conversation held on Aug. 7, 1939 at the estate of Dahlerus; see Editors' Note above; Dahlerus: *The Last Attempt*, chapter IV; and *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. VI, No. 443 and Appendix IV.

The jottings, which are in Göring's handwriting, read: "Attack against each people... Munich but no further... Saarbrücken... Churchill—Duff—Eden... Mere received than expected... Czechia March... Armaments purpose... Armed for war... English armaments!... England no military [?]. England rearmament since 1936... Attack from Germany... Russia? What would England say if we... Threats... Who threatens??... Versailles!... What England is capable of... English-German possibilities in war... So why such a war for Danzig... Risk for England... Risk for Germany... England's war only for vital interests (Danzig)... England everywhere against German interests... Then rather clear showdown... We can lose nothing... Vital interests!!!!... English-German... Danzig... Poland, Czechia—Belgium, India."

2. From 1918 until recently, feeling in Great Britain was rather pro-German. The British people regarded the Germans as a people closely related to themselves in race and temperament. The guilt for the World War was attributed here far more to the ambition of the German Kaiser and his advisers, than to a hostile attitude of the two peoples to each other. The German people's magnificent efforts in their economic and political reconstruction were followed here with admiration and appreciation.<sup>2a</sup>

3. It was, of course, regretted in this country that the parliamentary system in Germany failed in the task of securing a lasting orderly regime; but in general the British public is not prone, where other nations are concerned, to give preference to one form of government over another. Our people have learned from long political experience that different kinds of living conditions and political circumstances also demand different kinds of public institutions. In brief, the British people do not care about the form of government which another nation regards as proper. They maintain that a government is there to serve the people and that any government can remain in power only as long as it is, by and large, sure of the consent of its people.<sup>2b</sup>

4. The British people have little understanding for abstract ideas, if anything they treat high-sounding rhetorical pronouncements with the deepest distrust. The Englishman is wont to judge a government by its actions and not by the principles it proclaims. The harsh, and, from the British point of view, arbitrary treatment which the Reich Government have meted out to others holding different political views has undoubtedly angered large sections of the British public. Here they have not overlooked that at times unusual problems or unusual difficulties might also require unusual methods.<sup>2c</sup>

5. After the Munich Conference in September 1938, the majority of the British people stood behind the Government of Mr. Chamberlain, who was credited with the initiative and success of the Conference.<sup>2d</sup> The British people were at that time convinced that the Führer of the German people was determined to solve international questions, not by force, but by negotiation. They believed that the declarations signed at Munich, which denounced war as a means of solving international questions, were sincere and, moreover, really meant what they said. The implacable speech in Saarbrücken<sup>3</sup> did indeed deal this opinion a hard blow and subsequent events still further

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes in Göring's handwriting:

(a) against this sentence: "All possible hindrances".

(b) against this paragraph: "Oho! Press".

(c) against this paragraph: "?".

(d) this sentence is sidelined and has "False" written against it.

<sup>3</sup> On Oct. 9, 1938. For extracts from this speech see Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 1532-1537.

strengthened the opinion in this country that the Reich Government did, in fact, prefer the method of force to that of negotiation.

6. This feeling was further increased by the tone of the German press which sought to represent the Munich Conference as the result of British fear of German rearmament. When, furthermore, the German Government, in contrast to previous statements to the contrary, openly admitted that they had taken a decisive part in the Spanish Civil War, this further increased the doubts of the British public as to the sincerity of German assurances, and certain political groups in England did not hesitate to make capital out of this general feeling.

7. Public opinion in England never changes by leaps and bounds.<sup>2c</sup> Propaganda has little effect on the British people, except perhaps for certain districts in London and South Wales. Rational, moderate words will more readily receive a favourable hearing here than flamboyant accusations; the Englishman regards cautious moderation as a sign of prudence and not of weakness. Only in this light can Lord Halifax's most recent speech<sup>4</sup> be correctly understood as an objective assessment of the thoughtful but resolute mood of our people in this grave hour. It was the announcement of a carefully considered policy, based on the determination of our people to translate such policy into action.

8. At present public opinion in Great Britain is undoubtedly anti-German. The Englishman regards the great achievements of the German nation, not with anxiety or disfavour, but with the feeling that the arbitrary use of military power must be limited at some point. This feeling, and only this feeling, is the real root of the present anti-German attitude in England. The continual attacks in the German press upon British statesmen, who are represented as weaklings, are naturally not calculated to allay this feeling. On the contrary, such attacks strengthen the feeling of the British people that they must not give in to the pressure of the Axis Powers. Nothing expresses this feeling more clearly than the speed and extent of the response evoked amongst the British people by the call for voluntary military service. This feeling of the British people shows itself also in the decision of the Government to devote all its powers to rearmament. The striking progress of this rearmament leaves no doubt regarding the earnestness of this decision.<sup>2f</sup> It is true that this concentration on rearmament places an unavoidable strain on the economic and private life of the Englishman, which, for this quiet and comfort-loving people, is doubly disturbing. It should not be concealed that this strain on the British

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes in Göring's handwriting:

(e) this sentence is sidelined and "Oho. ?" written against it.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably a reference to Lord Halifax's speech of Aug. 3, 1939, in the House of Lords. See *Parl. Deb., H. of L.*, vol. 114, cols. 849-865. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 539.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes in Göring's handwriting:

(f) These three sentences have a sideline and a large query mark against them.

people is causing a growing impatience, an impatience which expresses itself in the feeling that if war is already unavoidable then at least let it come soon.<sup>2g</sup>

9. It is understandable that a nation in this frame of mind regards the Danzig question as one of principle, even as a symbolic problem. An attack on Danzig or the forcible incorporation of the Free City in the Greater German Reich would not be regarded here merely as a threat to the economic and political existence of Poland. Such an act would, in addition, be taken as obvious proof that the German Reich is determined to fulfil all its political desires by armed force.<sup>2h</sup>

10. An accompanying symptom of this anti-German feeling among the British people is a deep and growing mistrust of German assurances and declarations. A really concrete contribution by Germany to the cause of peace would, in the circumstances, be an invaluable contribution to the re-establishment of confidence between the two great nations. Chamberlain by his "appeasement" policy endeavoured to secure peace because doubtless he visualized the horror and misery which would be the consequences of a general war. The aim of his policy is to solve international problems by free and open discussion.<sup>2i</sup> Discussion presumes, however, in advance, participants who are prepared to deliberate with one another and to abide by the result of their discussions.

11. Some people here think that the German Government perhaps have doubts as to the permanence of an agreement between the German Government and the Government of Mr. Chamberlain. It is said here sometimes that perhaps the Reich Chancellor fears that an agreement between him and Mr. Chamberlain would be upset by another British Government with more anti-German views.<sup>2j</sup>

12. If such a fear actually exists in Germany it is based on a fundamental misconception. The vast majority of the British people desire nothing more than a secure peace. Every step for the security of peace would in consequence meet amongst all classes of people with such resounding enthusiasm that it is not conceivable that any party in a Government could prefer a war policy to a peace policy.

13. In addition, the strength of the Government of Mr. Chamberlain is frequently underestimated. The Government parties have 430 of the 615 seats in the House of Commons and a majority of 246 votes against any other possible combination of parties. Of the Opposition parties, the Labour Party has 154 seats, Sir Archibald Sinclair's Liberal Party numbers 17, Lloyd George's Independent Liberals have in all four seats, which, by the way, are held by himself, his son, his daughter, and a close friend of the family.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes in Göring's handwriting:

(g) this sentence has three sidelines and "that is the point" noted against it.

(h) these two sentences have a sideline and a large query mark against them.

(i) this sentence has a sideline and "Which?" written against it.

(j) this sentence has a sideline against it.

14. In the political life of Great Britain the Opposition is there to oppose. It is the traditional point of view of every British Parliamentary Opposition that the Government are never right and that it would be best for the country if the Government were defeated. In order to fulfil this purpose the Opposition has full freedom to criticize. This right publicly to discuss and criticize any measure of a Government does not appear to the British public as a parliamentary farce, but as important security against unjust or careless misuse of the power of the Government.

15. Many of the comments which are made in the House of Commons and many speeches of politicians who do not belong to the Government must be regarded in this light. They are very often meant rather as demonstrations of political opposition than as serious criticisms of Government measures. On the other hand we do not doubt that many of those violent anti-British attacks in the German press which cause so much annoyance here are mainly intended for home consumption.

16. The weight and importance of political statements depend naturally on the circumstances in which they are made. The most important circumstance which must be considered here is the legal freedom which permits of political demonstrations and comments. Otherwise, unfortunate and serious misunderstandings could arise. In judging political statements it must never be forgotten that an official propaganda machine, on the lines of the totalitarian States, does not exist in Great Britain. The most important sources of information and comments here are the daily press and the wireless.

17. The British radio is, on principle, forbidden ever to take up a one-sided attitude to foreign affairs. In broadcasting news it must, in general, confine itself to giving facts and avoid comments. Comments are only permissible as quotations of statements made by persons who substantiate the statements with their full name. Statements for or against the policy of the British Government are equally permissible.<sup>2k</sup>

18. Further misunderstanding might arise abroad from the attitude of the British press. It must always be remembered that in Britain all newspapers are completely private concerns. A "Government press", in the sense as understood on the Continent, does not exist in Great Britain.<sup>2l</sup> This independence of the press in Britain is in no way a sign of weakness or lack of influence of British Governments. It is far more a proof of their strength and security. On all questions of domestic and foreign politics the press of this country is given the greatest possible freedom. Apart from the laws to protect State

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes in Göring's handwriting:

(k) large query mark against this paragraph and "Oho".

(l) this sentence has a sideline and a large query mark against it.



secrets and personal honour, as well as against incitement to violent breaches of the peace, no bounds are set to the press in Great Britain.

19. The British daily newspapers can be divided into two large groups: the provincial press, and the great newspapers which are distributed throughout the country. Each of these groups, as well as each single newspaper, has its own character, its own political opinion and its special style of writing. This must be given due consideration if one wishes to judge correctly certain statements made in the British press. Nor is there any central organization whatsoever in Great Britain which could influence the news service or the attitude of the press, or wishes to do so. An occasional unanimity in British newspapers on certain questions is, therefore, never artificially created. It is, on the contrary, a true reflection of the real and genuine unanimity of the British people on these questions.

### No. 784

F5/0103-113

#### *Memorandum by the Minister in Hungary*

RM 41

#### RECORD OF THE RECEPTION OF THE HUNGARIAN FOREIGN MINISTER BY THE FÜHRER AT THE OBERSALZBERG ON AUGUST 8, 1939, AT 3 P.M.

The Führer, who received the Hungarian Foreign Minister in the presence of the Reich Foreign Minister, Counsellor Hewel, Legation Secretary Ujpétery and myself, opened the conversation by stating that we were shocked by the Hungarian Minister President's letter,<sup>1</sup> which said that Hungary could not participate in the event of a German-Polish conflict. He remarked that we had never expected military participation by Hungary in a conflict of that kind. The military aspect of the problem was moreover the exclusive concern of Germany. Support from other States was not even welcome.

Moreover Poland presented no military problem to us. The present behaviour of authoritative circles there must be described as sheer madness. The Führer stated emphatically that a repetition of the attempt to present a Polish ultimatum to Danzig would be appropriately answered by Germany. France and Britain would not be able to prevent us from doing this. Whether in the event of a general war in the West we would adopt a defensive or an offensive attitude was a question for later decision. The tone of the Polish press, and the way in which maps were circulating in Poland in which the territory of the Reich was partitioned, could only be described as a morbid degeneration

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 712, enclosure 2.

of reason. The Poles were evidently incapable of realistic thinking either in the military or in the political field. They were labouring under a dangerous delusion with regard to their own strength. Their illusions about the strength of the German Army were incomprehensible.

The Führer then emphasized again that Count Teleki's letter was impossible as it indicated an atmosphere which was incomprehensible in view of all the lost territory which Hungary had been able to recover during this and the previous year exclusively through German support. The Regent too had last August<sup>2</sup> expressed the opinion that Germany would collapse in the event of a conflict and had also conveyed this view to German military circles. The practical realization of Hungarian revision had only been made possible by great sacrifices on Germany's part (extension of our system of fortifications and the expenditure of seven thousand million gold marks for the Army). Further support for Hungarian revisionist desires was at present impossible in view of military factors, just as Hungary would not think of going to war on account of possible German claims to Alsace-Lorraine. The various problems were inseparable. If Germany were defeated in a war, Hungary's revisionist dreams would also be at an end. The Western Powers would then not only take care to restore Czecho-Slovakia but even to strengthen her. Mussolini and he, the Führer, clearly realized that they could only win together or lose together in all theatres of war. No enticements from the other side would succeed, therefore, in separating the Axis Powers from one another. In the event of a Mediterranean conflict Germany would support Italy with all her strength, and, conversely, Italy would support us in a struggle for Danzig as she had also done in the Austrian *Anschluss* and in the Czech crisis. Germany had no aspirations at Italy's expense. She required vital necessities in the North Sea and Baltic Sea areas, of mountains she had enough already. If Germany were to lose her position today, Hungary would automatically be smashed too. In this case, according to the plan of the Western Powers, Upper Austria, the Regensburg area and parts of Silesia were to be added to the new Czecho-Slovakia, which was to receive a common frontier with Yugoslavia, thus forming a Slav corridor through Central Europe. The new structure would naturally be made to serve the Western Powers.

If people in Hungary resented Germany's attitude towards Slovakia, he would say that we had no vital interests east of the Carpathians. From the military point of view too we did not want to burden ourselves with an appendix in the East. At present Slovakia was of military importance to us in respect of Poland. Otherwise the fate of Slovakia was a matter of indifference to him personally. With the

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<sup>2</sup> No record has been found; for Horthy's visit to Germany in August 1938, see vol. II of this Series, document No. 383.

well known proposal, he had made the most far-reaching offer to Poland that anyone could have made. Such an offer would not be made a second time. No other German could have been in a position voluntarily to offer Poland such a long-term understanding and at great sacrifices. The Poles had, however, brusquely rejected the offer and instead had concluded an alliance with Britain and begun a rabid press campaign. Had they gone mad in Warsaw? If an encounter with Poland and the Western Powers were necessary, then he, the Führer, wished it would come soon while he was still alive and the movement was still young. His experiences of Britain gained in the World War had not inspired in him any deep respect for her. The war would have ended very differently if Germany had not been led so miserably. Even after 1918, without revolution, we could easily have held out on the defensive for at least a year.

Poland presented no military problem at all for Germany. The tension with Poland had brought him the fanatical 100 per cent support of the Army as well as that of the last remaining opposition, namely certain Prussian aristocratic families who had been unable to understand his previous accommodating attitude to Poland. He knew the Polish Army well, from the numerous Germans who were serving there. Poland possessed a few good divisions which were moderately equipped, then medium and poor divisions with very bad equipment. We had exact information on the Polish mobilization machinery and the tactical knowledge of the Polish leaders, and also on the munitioning of the Army and its degree of reliability. The face of the Polish Army already bore the signs of death. There would never be a Greater Hungarian Kingdom if Germany lost the war.

It was to be hoped that Poland would still see reason at the last minute. Nevertheless we were reckoning from the start with a war on two fronts, which, if it came, would be conducted with lightning speed. Not only the Polish Army but also the Polish State would then be destroyed. Slovakia was, for us, an important military-political springboard. It would be very regrettable if the idea prevailed in Hungary that Hungary had only a limited interest in Germany's success. As long as Slav Czechs, Slav Slovaks, and also Slav Serbs, Slav Croats and Slav Poles oppressed Slav Ukrainians, the Panslav idea had perhaps lost in significance, but it would revive. Opposed to it would be only Germans, Hungarians and to a certain extent also Italians. The West would identify itself with this spiritual uprising, finding it useful.

Count Csáky interjected that Vansittart had had him informed four days ago that Hungary would share Germany's fate.

The Führer remarked that the Western Powers had created Czechoslovakia, which was not viable. She had become their most compliant and submissive State.

Count Csáky emphasized that on the whole in Hungary the general political situation was judged no differently from here. He regretted that the initiative taken by the Hungarian Government in the matter of the two letters had not had the desired result. The Hungarian Government had wanted to tell the Italians and us: "We stand by you. But our national honour does not allow us to fight against Poland."

The Führer added that the German people were now much more whole-heartedly anti-Polish than they had been anti-Czech, as the Poles had seized what had formerly been German territory and had behaved in the most bestial manner towards innocent Germans. So far he had not allowed publication of the fact that Germans had been castrated, as otherwise this would have caused an uproar. The Polish behaviour was impossible. The mood of the German Army, which had been derided by the Poles, was such that it would be a terrible disappointment for them if the Poles were, after all, to see reason at the last minute. The German people, who had not understood the policy of reconciliation hitherto adopted towards Poland, were of the same mind. The Führer repeated that if Poland again addressed to Danzig such a Note as the last,<sup>3</sup> Germany herself would immediately take it upon herself to answer it. It was a fallacy to assume that he was afraid of a reckoning with France and Britain. There would never be a more favourable moment than the present. No British ship would reach the North Sea, let alone the Baltic. A blockade of Germany would be possible only with fearful losses. We were also independent in the sphere of the most important raw materials. Between August 1 and September 1, the German *Luftwaffe* would be brought up to the enormous figure of 490,000 men, and next year to 600,000. We had the strongest air force in the world, twice as strong as that of France and Britain together. Our types of aircraft, too, were superior. We had also the strongest anti-aircraft defence in the world, and in addition over six and a half thousand armoured vehicles of the most modern construction. The German anti-tank defence was excellent. No Power in the world could penetrate Germany's western fortifications. Nobody in all his life had been able to frighten him, neither could Britain do so. Nor would he succumb to the oft predicted nervous breakdown. Perhaps Poland would still see reason, but recently his belief in this had vanished in consequence of the support given to the Poles by the British. If the Poles had accepted Germany's offer, they would have entered into the same friendly relations with us as Lithuania had done. It was our desire to gain good trading partners in the North Eastern States. As these countries had not been settled by Germans, their inhabitants could not, of course, become German.

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 774, enclosure.

Count Csáky, in further explanation of the two Hungarian letters, said that the Hungarian Government had not wished to expose themselves afterwards to the reproach of shirking, if they kept silent now on their attitude in a possible conflict with Poland. The Hungarian military authorities too were pressing for a clarification of political issues between Germany and Hungary, so that certain military conversations could begin soon. He knew that talks had already begun between Ambassador Ritter and Minister Sztójay<sup>4</sup> on the matter of cooperation in the field of war economy.

The Führer added that Britain was seeking mercenaries and had therefore given guarantees to the various countries. France was in mortal dread of isolation and thought she could gain courage by shouting. The Soviet Government apparently wished to bind themselves to no one, nor would they fight against us, as they were equally afraid of defeat or victory for their army. Furthermore their army was immobile. Their motorization was if anything a hindrance. Military leaders for the direction of operations did not exist. The Soviets would not repeat the Czar's mistake and bleed to death for Britain. They would, however, try to enrich themselves, possibly at the expense of the Baltic States or Poland, without engaging in military action themselves.

Germany's small western neighbours would try to remain neutral. Switzerland would fire on anyone who did not respect her neutrality. Yugoslavia was pursuing a policy of cautious, reserved neutrality, not from her own choice but at the dictates of necessity. In a crisis she would make every possible attempt to range herself against the Axis Powers, especially Italy. The occupation of Albania had brought to Italy an immeasurable improvement in the whole political situation. Greece would prefer to remain neutral but would regard British violation with mixed feeling, as at present she considers Britain to be the stronger and she needs British money. In theory, Rumania (Gafencu) was pursuing the policy of the honest broker, but in practice she was trying to mobilize as many as possible against us. Gafencu was, however, being cautious, knowing the poor condition of the Rumanian Army. Under cover of harmless journeys to England, the Prince Regent Paul and Gafencu were trying to attach themselves to Britain, without prematurely showing their hand. Turkey was dominated by the desire for British money. The Italian threat had been only a pretext for the change in her attitude. The Bulgarians were the only reliable nation in the Balkans and were not now quite so nervous since Italy's action in Albania and since we were supporting them in their rearmament. Bulgaria's army was not large but was well trained, and was a factor which at least compelled the others to be cautious. The most uncertain

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 706.

factor was Rumania, next came Yugoslavia and then Greece. The Rumanians had a guilty conscience where we were concerned. Their character lacked a strong foundation. They were, however, also afraid of documenting their opposition to us too obviously.

Count Csáky said that he knew Rumania very well. A distinction must be made between the Rumanians of Transylvania, who had proved trustworthy even under Hungarian leadership and the Old Rumanians,<sup>5</sup> particularly the Rumanian intelligentsia, who had been educated in Paris. On the defensive, the Rumanians were not bad soldiers. The Officers' Corps was bad. The Rumanians probably would not attack Hungary on their own initiative but would await a suitable opportunity, such as they considered to have arisen after the battle of Luck in 1916.<sup>6</sup>

The Führer agreed with this.

Count Csáky went on to say that even now the Rumanians had mobilized 150,000 men. Hungary was not doing so in order to save money, with which the Führer agreed. Count Csáky added that the Rumanians were at present constructing a line of defence some 650 km. in length from Yugoslavia to the Carpathians, with underground shelters and revolving armoured turrets, as well as a second line near Cluj and a third in the Carpathians. On the other hand they were completely neglecting the line of the Pruth and Dniester facing Russia. The Dobruja frontier, however, was being fortified with feverish haste.

The Führer also thought that should any occasion arise the Rumanians would at first take no action of their own accord.

Count Csáky expressed the opinion that Rumania would remain neutral as long as possible and that Yugoslavia would only intervene against us if things were going really badly for us.

The Führer said that calm prevailed in the Protectorate. Only two insignificant incidents had taken place. We were satisfied with the Czech workers and they were sending back enthusiastic reports to their homes. The Czechs were not united among themselves. A German-Polish conflict with its serious consequences for Poland would be the strongest vindication for Czech politicians such as Hácha.

Count Csáky remarked that in the event of a revival of Russian nationalism, Czechia, as an exponent of Panslavism, might become dangerous, and the Führer agreed with this.

Count Csáky went on to relate that patriotic radio talks in Russian from Moscow were said to be finding a strong response among the youth of Yugoslavia.

The Führer remarked that although no member of the Romanov

<sup>5</sup> i.e., from the Regat, the Old (pre-1919) Kingdom.

<sup>6</sup> In June 1916, the first Brusilov offensive opened against Lutsk. In August Rumania declared war on Austria-Hungary and invaded Transylvania.

family would find himself at the head of a new Russia it was quite possible that Bolshevism might put on a nationalist helmet. He then spoke of impressions gained from showings of Russian news-reels. It must be remembered that the younger generation in Russia knew only Bolshevism.

Count Csáky asked if the Führer thought it possible that, after the defeat of Bulgaria, a Turkish army might in certain circumstances advance against Hungary through Rumania. The Führer considered this out of the question, as the Turks had shown themselves to be lazy and had always required a lead from someone else. It was of course possible that they were fortifying the Chatalcha line and the Straits. With regard to the latter, incredibly little had been done in the years since the Montreux Convention.<sup>7</sup>

Count Csáky said that Atatürk<sup>8</sup> had told him in 1927 that if the Serbs and Bulgarians united in any way, that meant war for Turkey. Moreover, the latter would never wage war against Hungary. The new President of Turkey had recently confirmed this statement.

The Führer again emphasized that he thought it was out of the question that the Turks could be used in the West outside the frontiers of their own country. Moreover they would have to reckon with a devastating Italian air attack on Constantinople, good bases for which had been gained in Albania. By their new attitude the Turks were hoping to amass a great deal of gold but they would not want to bleed to death for Britain. He had ordered that our deliveries of arms to Turkey, to Rumania and, to some extent also, to Yugoslavia should be stopped and that these countries should receive from us only such war material as they could otherwise also buy elsewhere. It was nonsense to say that the French would not attack our West Wall but would fight in North Africa or throw themselves upon the Italians, for thanks to our own and the Italian submarines and their excellent bases, the enemy would not be able to operate in the Mediterranean. Besides, he would certainly not look on inactively if Italy were attacked by France.

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After this conversation, which lasted one hour and forty minutes, a further conversation of almost one and a half hours took place during tea, in which the Führer dealt in detail, among other things, with German-British relations, making reference to historical events, and said that had Chamberlain already been at the helm in 1935, the British Government might perhaps have accepted his generous offer, whereby the whole world situation would have been changed. It had merely been his wish to secure the necessary German *Lebensraum* including the Colonies, in return for which he would have supported Britain in every

<sup>7</sup> Of July 20, 1936; for the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 140, pp. 288-300.

<sup>8</sup> Kemal Atatürk, President of Turkey 1923-1938.

way, including the protection of her interests in East Asia. A European war would probably result in Britain losing Hong Kong, Singapore and India, but German colonies in East Asia and New Guinea were untenable without British rear cover against the advance of the yellow race which was to be expected owing to Britain's fault. If Britain were defeated we would never struggle for India. Chaos and war by all against all would start there. The Führer dwelt in detail on the different values and special peculiarities of the Czech and the Polish armies and stressed the megalomania of the latter.

The Reich Foreign Minister told me that Count Csáky, in a conversation which he had with him in private today, had promised to withdraw the two letters from the Hungarian Prime Minister to the Führer and Mussolini as, unfortunately, they had apparently been misunderstood. He accepted responsibility for this in the name of his Government.

Count Csáky told me on the return journey that he would notify us officially of this through the Hungarian Minister, Sztójay. A corresponding communication would be sent to Rome. In the very improbable event of the Hungarian Government disapproving of his action, he would resign.<sup>9</sup>

VON ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>9</sup> In a minute of Aug. 9 (73/51973) to Weizsäcker, Hewel wrote: "At his visit to the Obersalzberg yesterday the Hungarian Foreign Minister, Csáky, told the Führer that he was authorized by his Government to request the German Government to regard the two letters in question signed by Imrédy [sic? Teleki] as not having been written. He would also have this communication made officially to the respective Governments by the Legations in Berlin and Rome." According to a memorandum by Woermann dated Aug. 10 (not printed, 73/51974-75) a communication in this sense was handed to him by the Hungarian Minister on that date.

## No. 785

97/108474

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division V*

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, August 8, 1939.

President of the Senate Greiser, Danzig, has just informed me in reply to my enquiry by telephone that the conversations between the Führer and Gauleiter Forster at the Obersalzberg, which had started yesterday, would be continued today.<sup>1</sup> Gauleiter Forster would not fly back to Danzig until tomorrow. According to statements made by Zarske, Editor-in-Chief of the *Danziger Vorposten*, who was accompanying Gauleiter Forster, no substantial changes in dealing with the Danzig question may be expected for the time being.

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 774.



Herr Greiser also took the opportunity of telling me that the Polish Government had at first considered sending a reply to the last Note of the Danzig Senate<sup>2</sup> in the dispute over the Customs Inspectors, to the effect that the Danzig assertion that no instructions had been issued to the Danzig Customs Administration no longer to respect the Polish frontier officials as Customs Inspectors from the 6th of this month, did not correspond to the facts. The Polish Government held proofs that such instructions had been issued. It had, however, eventually been decided on the Polish side to refrain from sending such a Note.

Submitted for information: The State Secretary

Under State Secretary, Political Department

Under State Secretary, Legal Department

Deputy Director, Political Department

Senior Counsellor Schliep

Büro RAM

Minister Braun von Stumm

Kult. Spez.

BERGMANN

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 780. See also *British Documents*, Third Series, vol. vi, No. 587.



## Addendum

[EDITORS' NOTE: After this volume had gone to press the following documents, which should be read in conjunction with documents Nos. 119 and 193, were found in a special file dealing with the supply of war material to the Netherlands (*Kriegsgerät Niederlande*).]

(a)

6783/E513497

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, April 6, 1939.

W 511g<sup>1</sup> II.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor Kreutzwald.

The firm of Krupp is negotiating with the Netherlands Government regarding the supply of 120 light field howitzers. The Netherlands Government are desirous of having a declaration from the German Government that the guns will be delivered even in the event of the outbreak of a war. The Netherlands Minister has called here in order to express an interest in the conclusion of the contract.<sup>2</sup>

The High Command of the Wehrmacht and the Ministry of Economics have been asked for their observations. The Foreign Ministry has recommended that the declaration be given, so that, in the interests of German exports and the foreign currency accruing therefrom, the order should not be lost and the Netherlands not caused to depend exclusively on other countries for their rearmament.<sup>3</sup> In the opinion of the High Command of the Wehrmacht the decision as to whether the declaration should be given is militarily and politically so important that it must be taken by General Keitel himself, who will only be available after April 11. The Ministry of Economics is for giving the declaration.<sup>4</sup>

Submitted to the Foreign Minister through the Director of the Economic Policy Department and the State Secretary.

SABATH

<sup>1</sup> Telegram No. 20 of Apr. 5 from The Hague (not printed, 6783/E513494); in this Zech reported that, according to his information, the Netherlands Government would make an order for 120 field howitzers dependent on the delivery of 16 guns by Oct. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Jonkheer van Haersma de With. He called on Apr. 1 and left with Wiehl a memorandum in this sense (not printed, 6783/E513532).

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Agreed provided the Wehrmacht has no objections. R[ibbentrop]."

<sup>4</sup> Approval having been obtained from the competent economic authorities and the Chief of the OKW on Apr. 11 and 13 respectively (not printed, 6783/E513501 and -502), Zech was authorized, in despatch W 552g IV of Apr. 18 (not printed, 6783/E513509-11), to give the Netherlands Government the declaration.

(b)

6783/E513561

*Minute by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, July 14, 1939.

W 1116g.

The firm of Krupp has obtained the order<sup>1</sup> to supply 120 field howitzers and

<sup>1</sup> See preceding document.

120,000 rounds of ammunition to the Netherlands, to the value of 1,158,000 pounds sterling. The Wehrmacht has approved. Delivery will be completed within two and a half years. 20 guns will be provided on loan from Army stocks on October 1, 1939, until the Krupp deliveries begin.

Submitted to the Foreign Minister through the Director of the Economic Policy Department and the State Secretary.<sup>2</sup>

KREUTZWALD

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<sup>2</sup> Initialled by Erich Kordt on July 21 as having been submitted to the Foreign Minister. See also vol. VII of this Series, document No. 469, and vol. VIII, documents Nos. 7 and 44.

## APPENDICES



## Appendix I

### ITALO-GERMAN STAFF TALKS

In April and June 1939, Italo-German staff talks were held between Generals Keitel and Pariani, and between Admirals Raeder and Cavagnari. The antecedents of these talks are documented in volume IV of this Series, chapter IV (see documents Nos. 402, 403, 406, 411, 455, 456, 458, 459, 461, and 462). In the course of editing this volume, it was observed that there were gaps in the Foreign Ministry records on the actual conversations. This Appendix has, therefore, been compiled by the Editors from two files of the German naval archives, material from which was prepared for presentation at the Trial of the Major War Criminals at Nuremberg, under the document Nos. C-164 and C-193, but which was not put in evidence and is, therefore, not included in the record of the proceedings. These files from the Operations Division of the Naval War Staff are entitled: "1 Skl. I op. 29-1, Cooperation, Germany, Italy, Spain, Japan, Russia, Hungary, Rumania, April 1938-January 1941" and "1 Skl. Ic 1 It[aly], 1 General Matters. Cooperation Germany-Italy, September 1938-July 1939".

For the corresponding Italian records, see Mario Toscano: *Le conversazioni militari italo-tedesche alla vigilia della seconda guerra mondiale* in *Rivista Storica Italiana*, Anno LXIV, Fascicolo III; further details will also be found in the same author's *Le Origini del Patto d'Acciaio*.

#### I

8230/E585446-48

#### *Directive by the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht*

Written by an Officer.

BERLIN, March 22, 1939.

High Command of the Wehrmacht.

No. 35/39 g.K. WFA/L Chefs.

A I Op 35.

Ref: OKW/WFA No. 239/38 g. K. L Ia of November 26, 1938.<sup>1</sup>

6 copies.<sup>2</sup>

2nd copy.

Subject: Wehrmacht Conversations with Italy.

1) The Italian Government have sent word through their Ambassador<sup>3</sup> that they expect the Wehrmacht conversations to start soon. Innsbruck is envisaged as the venue.

In accordance with the instructions of the Führer and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht, the initial contacts with the representative of the Italian Armed Forces will be made through the Chief of the OKW. The negotiations of the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 411, enclosure. These "Notes for Wehrmacht Discussions with Italy" had been sent to the Commanders-in-Chief of the Army, Navy and Air Force by Keitel on Dec. 1, 1938 (8230/E585426). Raeder had replied on Dec. 5 proposing certain amendments (not printed, 8230/E585430-32) as had Brauchitsch on Dec. 9 (not printed, 8230/E585433-34), but no indication has been found as to whether these amendments were adopted.

<sup>2</sup> The copy here printed is the one sent to the OKM where it was received on Mar. 22. The other copies were distributed to the OKH (No. 1), to the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe (No. 3), and to the National Defence Department of the OKW (Nos. 4-6).

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 461 and 462.

High Commands of the Wehrmacht branches will follow as from a date still to be determined.

2) *Subject of the Negotiations*

The Führer has ordered that the military-political bases and the strategical and operational questions arising therefrom are to be *deferred* for the present.

The negotiations are rather, for the time being, to be restricted solely to a general review of the state of preparation for war by both sides and to mutual agreements on tactical-technical cooperation in the various fields.

The principle of reciprocity will have to be observed in all negotiations. In this respect, we should in every case consider as to whether the need for greater insight into certain fields of Italian [productive] capacity is such as to justify our supplying equally detailed information on our own position. The impressions gained from the first contacts through the Chief of the OKW might yet have a determining influence on the course of the later negotiations.

In general, the subjects for negotiation are, therefore, as follows:

a) *for the OKW*

- 1) Organization of the Wehrmacht Command (WFA).
- 2) Italian participation in all Germany's active and passive counter-intelligence measures (Ausl/Abw).
- 3) Italian participation in measures against the leakage of information abroad during a war (Ausl/Abw).
- 4) Cooperation in the organization of propaganda warfare (WFA).
- 5) Cooperation in the field of war economy (W.Stb.).
- 6) Cooperation in the field of intelligence (WFA).

b) *by the High Commands of the Wehrmacht branches*

- 1) Organization.
- 2) Armaments questions, industrial capacity, position as regards arms and ammunition, possibilities of mutual aid.<sup>4</sup>
- 3) Weapon performance and development questions.
- 4) Exchange of information between branches of the Armed Forces.

c) *by the Commander-in-Chief, Army*

- 1) Permanent fortification.
- 2) Railway and transport matters.

d) *by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy*

- 1) Capacity of dockyards for repairs.
- 2) Equipment of naval bases at home and in the colonies.

e) *by the Commander-in-Chief, Luftwaffe*

- 1) Exchange of target data.
- 2) Cooperation in air defence.
- 3) Matters concerning the meteorological service.
- 4) Mutual use of ground organizations.

3) In order that a summary review of the probable extent of the talks may be given to the Führer and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht, the Chief of the OKW will shortly invite the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the Army and Luftwaffe and the Chief of Staff of the Naval War Staff to a conference.<sup>5</sup>

The Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht

KEITEL

<sup>4</sup> A pencilled marginal note here refers to an addition to this clause, which was circulated by the OKW on Apr. 15 (8195/E582709) and read: "In view of the importance of the manufacture of gunpowder and explosives for the whole of the Wehrmacht, reference should be made to the OKW (War Economy Staff) when dealing with the munitions questions. This also applies to factories, production from which is not exclusively earmarked for a particular branch of the Wehrmacht."

<sup>5</sup> No record of such a conference has been found.



## II

8195/E582765-56

*The Military Attaché in Italy to the High Command of the Wehrmacht*

No. 64/39 g.K.

ROME, March 23, 1939.

Enclosure I to Report 10/39 geh.<sup>1</sup>1.Abt.Skl.Ic 650.<sup>2</sup>

Subject: Conversation in Innsbruck.

Acting on the telephoned instructions of the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, I conveyed to General Pariani on the afternoon of March 22 that the talks he wished to have<sup>3</sup> were to start now, and made the following proposal:

There should be a meeting during the week from March 22 to April 1 with Colonel General Keitel in Innsbruck, in order to establish a basis for the subsequent talks between the General Staffs of the three branches of the Armed Forces. The subject of the talks would first of all be to obtain a picture of the *potential de guerre* of the two Powers.

General Pariani declared that he had already been authorized by the Duce to accept the invitation to the conversations and would be pleased to come to Innsbruck. He would leave the date to Colonel General Keitel, but from March 31 to April 3 he would be detained by manoeuvres in which 34 generals, including almost all the General Officers Commanding, were participating.

General Pariani expressed his congratulations on the re-incorporation of the Memel territory and his admiration for the rapidity with which military occupation of Bohemia and Moravia had been carried out. In thinking in terms of a future war, there was no doubt that much had been achieved towards securing the Balkan hinterland, but it must be borne in mind that the determination to re-arm and to resist had increased in Britain, France and America. Nevertheless their rearmament would not proceed fast enough for them to be ready by 1939 and 1940, perhaps not even by 1941. But from 1942 onwards one must reckon on both the British and the Americans being fully prepared.

He thought the closest contacts between the German and the Italian Armies essential before this coming war of "rapid decision". Not only General Staff talks but also precise knowledge of the good and bad sides of one's partner was required. Getting to know each other like this could not be done through short attachments lasting two or three weeks, but only through the exchange of officers for several months. He had arranged for courses for the Italian General Staff as they must get to know the language of their fellow combatants better than that of their opponents. The "betrothal" must gradually become a "marriage".

VON RINTELEN

<sup>1</sup> Not found.<sup>2</sup> Nine copies of this report were made and distributed by the OKW under the file No. 334/39 g. K. Ausl. III L and dated Mar. 31. The fourth copy went to the Intelligence Division, Naval War Staff, which, under the reference number 3476/39 g. Kdos., copied and sent it to the Operations Division.<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 402.

## III

8195/E582763-67

*Unsigned Memorandum<sup>1</sup>*

RECORD BASED ON A MEMORANDUM<sup>2</sup> BY THE HEAD OF OFFICE A<sup>3</sup> ON THE INFORMATION PASSED TO HIM AND THE CHIEFS OF THE GENERAL STAFFS OF THE ARMY AND THE LUFTWAFFE BY COLONEL GENERAL KEITEL, ON THE LATTER'S CONVERSATION WITH THE ITALIAN GENERAL PARIANI AT INNSBRUCK ON APRIL 4, 1939.<sup>4</sup>

The conversations were started somewhat suddenly in consequence of Italian pressure.

Previously there had been a certain coolness on the Italian side, which was probably occasioned by our independent and not previously notified action in Czechia and in Mermel as well as by the suspicion that we had been involved in certain happenings in Yugoslavia—the fall of Stojadinović, and Croat aspirations. German subversive activities were suspected. Ciano had hinted at such ideas.

Accordingly, no communication was made by Pariani at Innsbruck on the immediately impending Albanian operation.

The Führer had ordered conversations between the Armed Forces to be started. The principles laid down in the OKW directive<sup>5</sup> were to be adhered to. In the Führer's view a certain degree of caution was necessary because of the lack of security occasioned in the unreliable Italian Court circles by their connections abroad and in the Francophile elements of high society. Nevertheless, it was to be made unmistakably clear that "the one would march alongside the other, come what might", and that we would help each other without stint. But caution should be observed over giving figures.

Pariani called the Axis the most indestructible thing there is. In the event of a war between Italy and France, Italy would only ask for material assistance—no troops.

Keitel: How was it thought that such a war might arise?

Pariani showed a map. On this the Axis was shown blue, the enemy red, graduated according to the degree of hostility.

Red: France—French North Africa, Jibuti.

Pink: Britain.

Striped: Egypt.

The Italian demands on the Suez Canal were an administrative question. The rest would be settled through a "colonial War", not through a European war. The war would remain localized to France-Italy.

Keitel had the impression that Pariani made these apparently spontaneous statements on the basis of strict instructions which he had brought with him from Rome. Keitel therefore continued:

<sup>1</sup> This document is in the handwriting of Lt. Commander Neubauer, an officer of the Operations Division, Naval War Staff, and is undated but it is apparent from document No. iv in this Appendix that it relates to Apr. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> The Naval Command Office (Marinekommandoamt) of which Rear Admiral Schniewind, as Chief of Staff of the Naval War Staff, was Head.

<sup>4</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XIII, Appendix III.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. i in this Appendix.

In such a case a European war would be inevitable. Just as Italy and Germany are welded together so are Britain and France. At the very latest, if things were going badly for France, Britain would intervene and would by then have been able to make her preparations in peace. It must be stated plainly: this we would not have. We should be losing all opportunities for surprise and be letting our ability to take the initiative ourselves slip from our hands, as the others would then be fully prepared.

Pariani: If we saw things in this way then it would be much better for both to attack together.

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The danger that lies in the Italian line of thought will also be made clear to the Italians in the conversations of Göring with the Duce on the 16th and 17th<sup>6</sup> and in the Brauchitsch talks in Rome at the beginning of May.<sup>7</sup> If necessary the Führer intends to have another meeting with the Duce this spring.

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The reputation and prestige of the Duce are somewhat on the decline at the moment. Working against him are not so much the grumblers as the chauvinists for whom Italy's successes, compared with those of Germany, are not coming fast enough. That is also a reason for the sudden action in Albania. From this too perhaps comes the idea of a colonial war to be conducted by Italy *alone* and the requisite assumption that such a war could be localized.

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Keitel emphasized once again that *we* must impose our initiative on the others. Therefore a surprise attack. According to instructions, he did not name any time for this but only hinted at it being in a few years' time. (Pariani had given 1941-42 as the most favourable time and moment for Italy in relation to her greatest strength.) Britain could not keep pace in the armaments race, at least where the Army and the Air Force were concerned.

Keitel gathered the impression that the Italian rearmament could not be kept up much longer (financial reasons). The Navy was already very modest in its progress (delay in new constructions, etc.).

The war would need to be decided quickly. A war of long duration could be endured by Italy even less than by ourselves.

The economic basis must be broadened; Balkans, Rumania. The materials to be obtained there would fill many gaps. Further close cooperation necessary to overcome transport problems. Communications over the Alps, through Yugoslavia, etc., must be improved, signals communications must be set up.

Pariani had to hand the industrial programme for peace and war. These data will be followed up by the OKW.<sup>8</sup>

The Italians are not troubled about their Alpine front in case of war between Italy and France. There are three historical invasion routes. Fortifications on the Italian side are admittedly moderate; however, a French break-through could be prevented. French Alpine fortifications are considerable.

Pariani then gave a few more details on the present state of preparation of the Italian Army, the occupation of Libya, the security measures on the French

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<sup>6</sup> See this volume, documents Nos. 205, 211 and 252.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. vi in this Appendix.

<sup>8</sup> According to a minute of Apr. 14 (not printed, 8195/E582754), Keitel drew up three memoranda on the basis of the information given him by Pariani. These memoranda (not printed, 8195/E582758-62) contain information on (i) the Italian Army, Navy and Air Force and Italian war industry, (ii) certain details about fuel reserves, chemical warfare production and raw material requirements and (iii) precautionary military measures already taken.

and Yugoslav frontiers, and the short-term despatch of 6,000 Alpini troops to Spain, as well as certain difficulties that Franco is having in his own ranks (Yagüe).<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Commander of a Moroccan Army Corps in the Nationalist Army during the Civil War; in a speech on Apr. 9, 1938, he had unfavourably compared the conduct of the Germans and Italians in the war with that of the Spanish Republicans; see *Survey of International Affairs, 1938* (London, 1941), vol. 1, p. 288.

## IV

8195/E582768

*Directive by the Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht*

High Command of the Wehrmacht  
No. 882/39 g.K. WFA/L Ia

BERLIN, April 17, 1939.  
1 Abt. Skl. Ic 762.  
8 Copies.<sup>1</sup>  
2nd Copy.

Subject: Wehrmacht conversations with Italy.

The Wehrmacht conversations with Italy, in accordance with the Führer's orders, were started between the Chief of the OKW and General Pariani on April 5 and 6 at Innsbruck.

As authorized by the Führer on April 11, when reporting to him, the Chief of the OKW informed the High Commands of the branches of the Wehrmacht (Chiefs of the General Staffs and Chief of Staff of the Naval War Staff) orally on April 12<sup>2</sup> on the course of the conversations.

At this conference the Chief of the OKW also conveyed the Führer's authority for the separate branches of the Wehrmacht to enter into the negotiations in accordance with OKW No. 35/39 g.K. WFA/L Chfs. of March 22, 1939.<sup>3</sup>

Arrangements as to the dates for the negotiations are left to the High Commands of the branches of the Wehrmacht, but the OKW desires to be kept currently informed of their intentions, so that the Führer and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht may, if necessary, have opportunity to give supplementary directives.

Equally the OKW desires to be kept currently informed on the progress and results of these conversations.

The Chief of the High Command of the Wehrmacht  
KEITEL

<sup>1</sup> The copy here printed is the one sent to the Operations Division, Naval War Staff, where it was received on Apr. 21. The distribution list shows that other copies went to the OKH (No. 1), to the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe (No. 3), and that the remaining five copies were distributed inside the OKW.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. III in this Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. I in this Appendix.

## V

8230/E585452-55

*The Military Attaché in Italy to the High Command of the Wehrmacht*<sup>1</sup>

No. 79/39 g. Kdos.

ROME, April 24, 1939.

Enclosure 1 to Report 15/39 geh. of April 27, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

A I Op. 64.

Subject: General Pariani on the talks at Innsbruck.

During the journey back from Berlin to Rome, on April 21-22,<sup>3</sup> I asked General Pariani how it was that at Innsbruck he had spoken to Col. General Keitel of a localized war between Italy and France,<sup>4</sup> whereas in all previous conversations with me he had only talked about the war to be waged jointly by the totalitarian States against the Western Powers.

General Pariani replied on the following lines:

"I agree absolutely with Col. General Keitel that a war between France and Italy cannot be localized. It is one thing turning against Czecho-Slovakia or Albania, and another directly to threaten France. A war with France will certainly spread. Great Britain will feel threatened in any war against France.

"I had, however, been instructed by the Duce to open the talks at Innsbruck by explaining that, in the event of a clash with France only, Italy would not require German armed support but merely material aid. These instructions of the Duce's are presumably to be understood in the same way as in the case of Germany last autumn, when she, too, did not wish to avail herself of Italy's armed support in the event of a localized war. A war between Italy and France only would, of course, of necessity have to be fought mainly in North Africa, since it is not possible to break through the Alpine Front from either side. It is, however, my view that such a war need hardly be reckoned with; at all events, Italy has no intention of attacking France single-handed."

General Pariani said further:

"The statements made by Col. General Keitel at Innsbruck have given me an idea of how far Germany has at present got with her armaments and what difficulties remain to be overcome. Nor are, of course, the Italian Armed Forces quite ready at the moment. I realize, therefore, that it is at present of no use to draw up a joint operational plan for an attack on the Western Powers, as there might well be many changes during the next few years.

"Nevertheless, I consider it necessary even now to arrive at a thoroughly clear understanding on two points: 1) Defence against an attack by the Western Powers, without studying more closely the reasons which might bring it about. 2) Preparations should be made now for an attack on the Western Powers and a break-through of the Maginot Line, to be made at some later stage. For this reason we must, above all, agree together on the means of attack to be employed and to be given priority development.

"I do not consider that artillery, however strong, is alone capable of forcing a break-through, owing to the depth of modern positions. Nor is the tank the

<sup>1</sup> Copies of this report were sent from the OKW to the OKM and the Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe under a cover note of June 12 (not printed, 8230/E585451).

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> In a note of Apr. 3, 1939 (not printed, 8417/E592806) Pariani had accepted to attend a parade in Berlin on Apr. 20, in honour of Hitler's fiftieth birthday. An unsigned, undated memorandum (not printed, 8417/E592807) states that he was to leave Rome on Apr. 18 and was to return on Apr. 22, being escorted by the German Military Attaché.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. III in this Appendix.

panaces, in view of the strength of anti-tank defences. Moreover, I do not think that armoured troops alone are capable of breaking through fortified positions.

"There are also other means of attack to be studied and developed. I believe in the effectiveness and great importance of chemical warfare. This is also easier for Italy to prepare for and conduct, in so far as she has all the raw materials for chemical warfare in her own country, whilst she lacks iron and ores. I consider it possible to carry out a gas attack on a front 40-50 km. wide. Therefore it is expedient for us jointly to develop this weapon further. The large gas training area which I set up in Libya may also enable the German Army to carry out better tests than are possible in Europe.

"I see a further method of warfare, which should be specially developed, in the transport of troops by air. It is more important to have a large fleet of carrier planes than many bombers. Air raids on cities, factories and so forth are bound to result in retaliation on our own very much endangered hinterland. But the conveyance of an entire army corps to the rear of the enemy positions to be breached is an important part of modern warfare for breaking through fortified lines. This still sounds rather fantastic at the moment, but I consider it absolutely feasible in the not too distant future. It requires, in the first place, the development of small guns which, when dismantled, air borne troops can take with them. Here, too, I see an opportunity for joint work, that is, technical preparations for the tasks of the future.

"I consider that we cannot avoid an armed conflict with the Western Powers, as, so far, the British and French show no signs whatsoever of a rational attitude to European and colonial problems. Like the Duce, I am firmly convinced that Italy and Germany are and must remain bound together for better or for worse in this struggle.

"Thus, I particularly welcome the opportunity of discussing the problems with Lt. General von Brauchitsch on the occasion of his visit to Rome.<sup>5</sup> On my side, I have been vested with full powers by the Duce to negotiate on all questions concerning the Army."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See document No. vi in this Appendix.

<sup>6</sup> This copy has no signature.

## VI

8195/E582791-93

### *The Naval Attaché in Italy to the High Command of the Navy*

No. G 1285

ROME, May 13, 1939.

Received May 19.

1 Abt. Skl. 1583 g.

Subject: Visit of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army to Italy from April 29 to May 10, 1939.

## I

From a conversation with the Military Attaché here the following is perhaps of interest in connection with the visit of Colonel General von Brauchitsch:

### 1) *Course of the visit*

In Libya the Commander-in-Chief visited the port installations of Tobruk and Tripoli.

In Italy the shipyards of Odero-Terni-Orlando in La Spezia were inspected, and with them the battleship *Littorio* which is nearing completion. On this occasion one of the naval construction engineers there told the German Naval

Attaché here that it was intended to include the *Littorio* in the active squadron in February, 1940 (conclusion of the trials?).

2) *Visit of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army to the Italian Under Secretary of State for the Navy, Admiral Cavagnari.*

A short visit, without any particular points under discussion. Admiral Cavagnari mentioned that Admiral Salza had returned much impressed from his visit to Berlin<sup>1</sup> and then mentioned briefly that the conversations in progress between the General Staffs of the two Armies would also be extended to the Naval Staffs in the near future.

3) *Personalities*

a) The Italian Under-Secretary of the Army, General Pariani, approached the Commander-in-Chief personally during his visit and achieved far-reaching agreement with him on all the questions raised. The Commander-in-Chief has invited General Pariani for a return visit in the autumn of this year.

b) The Commander-in-Chief was most favourably impressed by the personality of the Governor of Libya, Marshal Balbo. Both in great and small matters Marshal Balbo's organizing ability and determination of character emerged repeatedly during the visit to Libya.

4) *Cooperation by the General Staffs*

In continuation of the Innsbruck conversations the following directives were laid down:

a) Operational cooperation will not take place for the time being. At present there is no necessity for this as long as no collective plan of operations is to hand. Joint operations are not envisaged at the moment.

These agreements were all the easier because General Pariani himself led the conversations along these lines. Future exchanges of ideas on operations are only to take place through the persons at the head.

b) The technical cooperation will be continued in the form which it has already taken since the autumn of 1938, that is in the five sub-commissions with whose direction General Fromm is charged.<sup>2</sup>

c) The technical conversations will in future be extended to methods of training. Under this is included also an exchange of officers of both armies which is envisaged for the future.

## II

As relevant to the subject, I include a note of a conversation of the Air Attaché, Major General von Bülow, with the Italian Air Ministry on May 2, 1939, concerning: *Cooperation between the Italian and German Air Ministries:*

On the question as to when the first conversations between the Italian and German Air Ministries should begin, the Italians answered that General Valle<sup>3</sup> had so far been unable to reach any decision. He hoped to be able to give the German Air Attaché a final decision in the next few days. In the opinion of Colonel Senzadenari of the Italian Air Ministry, General Valle apparently wished to hold the first conversations in Rome in the middle of May.<sup>4</sup>

LÖWISCH<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For the celebrations of Hitler's fiftieth birthday.

<sup>2</sup> No record has been found.

<sup>3</sup> Under Secretary of State in the Italian Air Ministry and Chief of Staff of the Italian Air Force.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. ix in this Appendix.

<sup>5</sup> Captain Löwisch succeeded Captain Lange as German Naval Attaché on May 5, 1939.

## VII

8195/E582784-85

*Grand Admiral Raeder to Admiral of the Fleet Cavagnari*

BERLIN, May 17, 1939.

Sent May 23.

zu 1.Skl. Ic 1356/39 geh.<sup>1</sup>h.vb. 1.Skl. 1301/39.<sup>2</sup>

DEAR ADMIRAL: It is with great pleasure that I have learned from your letter<sup>2</sup> that you also consider it right to intensify the cooperation between the Royal Italian and the German Navies. I gladly accept your suggestion to hold a personal conversation to this end. I am convinced that this conversation will lead to comprehensive and fruitful agreements as to how the measures for cooperation already taken can be supplemented and intensified to the benefit of both Navies.

In accordance with your proposal to select a half-way place for this meeting may I invite you to be my guest with the gentlemen of your suite at Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance? I would propose as date for the conversations June 13 and 14, or two days between June 19 and 23, in the hope that this time may be convenient to you.

The various points, discussion of which would seem useful to me, I shall communicate to you, Herr Admiral, through my Attaché in Rome;<sup>3</sup> I would be grateful to you if you would add to these points as you desire so that my staff can make suitable preparations for this conversation also.

Assuring you of my highest esteem,

I remain, Yours etc.,

R[AEDEER]<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8195/E582783). In this report of May 4 Captain Lange, the Naval Attaché at the German Embassy at Rome, stated that Admiral Cavagnari had confirmed that he was ready at any time for the conversations with the German Navy, proposed by the Germans.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8195/E582781-82). This letter was dated May 3.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. VIII in this Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> The draft from which this document has been printed was actually initialled by Raeder on May 15. It forms Part I of a draft of instructions to be sent to the Naval Attaché in Rome of which the document here printed as No. VIII formed Part II.

## VIII

8195/E582785-86

*The Chief of Staff of the Naval War Staff to the Naval Attaché Group<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, May 17, 1939.

zu 1.Skl. Ic 1356/39 geh.<sup>2</sup>h.vb. 1.Skl. 1301/39.<sup>3</sup>

Subject: Meeting of the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy with the Italian Admiral Cavagnari.

Previous reference: Naval Attaché Rome G 1244 of May 4, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

It is requested that the Naval Attaché in Rome be given instructions on the following lines:

<sup>1</sup> All correspondence with Naval Attachés was channelled through the Naval Attaché Group. It has been ascertained from the Attaché's reply of May 31 (not printed, 8195/E582812-15) that these instructions were sent to Rome as M.Att. 2977 IIg of May 23.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed; see document No. VII in this Appendix, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed; see *ibid.*, footnote 2.



"The Commander-in-Chief of the Navy has declared himself agreeable to the meeting proposed by Admiral Cavagnari. The correspondence on this is attached. On the German side the following are to take part in the meeting, apart from the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and his adjutant: Rear-Admiral Schniewind, the Naval Attaché at Rome, Captain Lange (as soon as the final date has been arranged appropriate orders for attachment will be given),<sup>4</sup> Commander Neubauer, Commander von Davidson. It is assumed that on the Italian side the Italian Naval Attaché in Berlin<sup>5</sup> will receive orders to take part in the conversations.

On the German side the following subjects are proposed for discussion:

- 1) Aims and principles of further cooperation between the German and Italian Navies.
- 2) Fixing the various spheres in which further cooperation is to take place.
- 3) Basic agreements on the methods to be adopted for the further discussions, etc.

The Naval Attaché in Rome is instructed to present to Admiral Cavagnari the foregoing points proposed for discussion and to request additions to these points, should the Italians desire to make them. It is proposed to clarify further details for the meeting through the Attachés."

The Naval Attaché Group is requested to inform the Italian Naval Attaché in Berlin of the substance of the foregoing instructions. Further the Naval Attaché Group is asked to make the necessary technical preparations for the meeting.<sup>6</sup>

[SCHNIEWIND]

<sup>4</sup> Captain Lange, who had been Naval Attaché in Rome until the beginning of May, had been posted Captain of the cruiser *Emden*; he was detached for these conversations by an order of June 7 (not printed, 8195/E582841).

<sup>5</sup> Commander Count Pecori Giraldi.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in Lt. Commander Neubauer's handwriting: "Foreign Ministry separately informed (see I c 1491/39 geh.)." The Foreign Ministry were sent copies of the document here printed and of the letters exchanged between Cavagnari and Raeder (see document No. VII and footnote 2 thereto) under a cover note bearing this number on May 24, 1939 (not printed, 8195/E582787). In a letter of June 6 (not printed, 100/65598), Woermann informed Mackensen briefly of Raeder's arrangements for the naval staff conversations and of the proposed points for discussion. No other documents on these conversations have been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.

## IX

8195/E582796-98

### *The Naval Attaché in Italy to the High Command of the Navy*

No. G 1335

ROME, June 1, 1939.

Received June 6.

1.Abt. Skd. 20872/39 g.

Subject: Cooperation between the German and Italian Armed Forces.

Herewith are submitted—in translation from the Italian original—the agreements reached between the Italian and German Air Forces during the presence in Rome of Colonel General Milch, from May 24 to 26 last.<sup>1</sup>

"During the conversations between the representatives of the German and Italian Air Forces from May 24 to 26, on how jointly to proceed in developing cooperation between the two Air Forces, agreement was reached on the following points:

<sup>1</sup> See also this volume, document No. 423, footnote 3.

1) The German Air Ministry and the Italian Air Ministry agree to provide each other at definite intervals with data on the strength of either air force, on training establishments and the aircraft industry. For this purpose a questionnaire will be prepared in consultation with both General Staffs.

2) The information referred to above will be exchanged every three months, beginning on July 7, 1939, through the appropriate Air Attachés, or possibly through some other liaison staff to be set up.

3) The Italian and German intelligence services will make direct contact concerning the exchange of collated intelligence on the English and French air forces, and of their prospective allies, as well as all other targets [*Zielgruppen*] which are of importance for the conduct of aerial warfare.

In collecting information each office shall give priority to such information as relates to the targets within the theatre of war of the air force concerned.

4) In the French territory the following areas were agreed as *normally* concerning the German and Italian Air Forces respectively, viz.:

a) South of the 45th Parallel would *normally* fall to the Italian Air Force.

b) North of the 47th Parallel *normally* to the German Air Force.

c) In the Zone between the 45th and 47th Parallels the two Air Forces will operate in combination.<sup>2</sup>

5) It is considered expedient to provide for the possibility of posting German units to Italian territory and Italian units to German territory in view of the possibility of creating a special concentration of forces on a certain hostile sector or of employing units with particular armament and training for special purposes most effectively.

6) Arrangements for the ground organizations for the units referred to in paragraph (2) will be made from case to case and in accordance with operational requirements.

7) The two General Staffs also consider it expedient to review the possibility of posting, for a limited period in time of peace on the occasion of manoeuvres and troop exercises, German units to Italy and *vice versa* for a period to be determined from case to case.

8) The General Staffs on both sides consider it expedient to increase the mutual exchange of officers within the Air Forces, and especially in respect of the higher ranks.

9) The General Staffs on both sides consider it expedient to exchange between the two Air Forces the Bo Models that have been introduced, in order to study the possibility of using Italian munitions in German machines and *vice versa* and to avoid extensive transports of munitions having to be supplied overland in an emergency.

10) The technical experts of the two Air Forces will accordingly study the possibility of standardizing fuels.

11) The two General Staffs consider it expedient to set up at once the following mixed commissions:

a) A commission to study questions of the exchange of mass-produced material, of information on new projects, and new developments in the sphere of equipment,

b) a commission to study all questions of communications and meteorological services, especially in respect of direct telegraph communications between the General Staffs on both sides (telephone, telegraph and teleprinter),

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Lt. Commander Neubauer's handwriting: "Comment by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, on the Naval Attaché Group's copy: 'We wish to proceed similarly (separate spheres of operations)'."

c) a commission to study the possibility of standardizing the air law of both countries, as it applies to aerial warfare.

12) Further, both General Staffs consider it necessary as soon as possible to create a liaison staff to be exclusively entrusted with maintaining contact between the two General Staffs.

To start with, this liaison staff could be represented by a German officer attached to the Air Attaché in Rome and an Italian officer attached to the Italian Air Attaché in Berlin.

The agreements recorded above will come into force at a time to be fixed by the supreme German and Italian authorities after approval of these agreements. ROME, May 26, 1939

MILCH

VALLE"

LÖWISCH

## X

8195/E582790

### *Memorandum by the Officer representing the OKM with the Operations Staff of the Luftwaffe<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, June 12, 1939.

#### COOPERATION WITH THE ITALIANS

1) The key point for cooperation is in the technical field, viz.:

a) In experiments;

b) In new construction.<sup>2</sup>

*Principle.* The Italians are only to have access to what is ready for use by the troops. They will have no insight into aeroplanes, arms, etc. at present being developed.

2) In respect of the liaison staff between the Italian and German Air Forces special reserve will be exercised from the German side. The matter will be purposely handled with exceptional dilatoriness. It is intended to refrain for a considerable time<sup>3</sup> from establishing this "liaison staff" and until then to restrict the liaison simply to the exchange of visits.

M[ÖSSEL]

<sup>1</sup> Note at head of the document in Lt. Commander Neubauer's handwriting: "Comments made by Lt. Commander Mössel (Reich Air Ministry) on the Agreement between the Reich and Italian Air Ministries" (document No. IX in this Appendix). Lt. Commander Mössel was seconded to the Air Ministry from the OKM in May 1938, as the representative of the OKM on the Operations Staff of the Luftwaffe.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "On b): In this way the Italians will be appeased and put off. It is not, in principle, intended to make 'new constructions' accessible to them. Thus, the release of the Ju 88, its flying by Italian officers, its dismantling etc. has been refused. The posting of Italian engineers to this type has also been refused. Fr[icke] 13/6." Captain Fricke was Head of Operations Division, Naval War Staff.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Fricke's handwriting: "This year, in any case, nothing is to happen about this."

## XI

8195/E582931-33

*Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

June 13, 1939.

Today's meeting, which is to serve to clear up questions of principle and to lead to basic agreements, is especially welcome. It would seem that through the agreements made by the two Foreign Ministers and through the preceding conversations between General Pariani and Colonel General Keitel, the basis for cooperation had been so far settled as to permit of entering into separate discussions on technical details. These conversations are to begin as quickly as possible, and for this purpose meetings of the relevant experts are to be arranged. Nevertheless, it appears necessary once more to make sure beforehand, by a conversation between the two Commanders-in-Chief, that both sides are starting on the separate discussions with the same ideas in mind, and thus to avoid time-wasting references back and misunderstandings. The organizations of the Italian Ministry of Marine and the German High Command of the Navy differ from each other considerably in some points, a fact which in itself requires that there be laid down precisely in advance, the different spheres of collaboration, and that agreement be reached on the methods to be followed in future. In our view, the period of this first conversation could be limited to two days, since it could be assumed that, given equal readiness for close cooperation and sincere frankness on either side, the broad directives for further work could quickly be established.

It would appear expedient first to discuss quite briefly the political situation as the basis for all military deliberations, then to exchange some ideas in the operational context, and finally to negotiate on the three points already raised in the previous correspondence.

The basic German consideration is that the Führer wishes to achieve security for German "living space" by political means. A strong Wehrmacht, ready for action at any moment, must stand behind this policy, causing it to appear to the Powers politically opposed to us impossible or at least exceedingly risky to attack the Axis Powers. We have every interest in attaining our goal by peaceful means and shall certainly not seek any armed conflict of our own accord. Nevertheless we must never lose sight of the possibility that our opponents will force a military conflict upon us. With these ideas in mind we are pursuing a continuous careful expansion of all the branches of our Wehrmacht; this expansion is not bound to any definite point of time, nor directed at any specific target.

In the event of a serious military conflict requiring mutual armed assistance, England and France must, in the present situation, be regarded as in all circumstances standing together against us. It is highly likely that Russia must be reckoned among them, as equally the United States, although the date at which these States would enter the conflict can be variously assessed, but without there being any doubt that they would be able and willing to give effective support to our opponents. Finally, in case of such a conflict, Turkey must also be reckoned as an opponent. In the case of such a conflict, the following possi-

<sup>1</sup> A second copy of this memorandum (8195/E582959-60) is headed "German Exposé on the subjects for the Conversations." It appears to have been used as the basis for the opening remarks made by Raeder at the meeting at Friedrichshafen; see document No. xu in this Appendix.

bilities are envisaged of operational and strategic cooperation between Germany and Italy in a war at sea and of reciprocal action in the conduct of sea warfare by each side, not taking account of the repercussions arising from the Japanese attitude.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The concluding words are written in Lt. Commander Neubauer's handwriting and the memorandum ends here.

## XII

8195/E582881-85

### *Unsigned Memorandum*

RECORD OF THE CONVERSATIONS<sup>1</sup> AT FRIEDRICHSHAFEN ON JUNE 20-21, 1939

The Commander-in-Chief of the Navy first had a short conversation with Admiral Cavagnari alone, when he emphasized his desire to conduct the conversations in an open and friendly form without any reservations. In particular, he briefly informed Admiral Cavagnari about the torpedo detonator and about the actual size of our new constructions and agreed with him that in future, too, such communications could be exchanged between themselves alone as the two Commanders-in-Chief. Conversations were then begun in a wider circle. The Commander-in-Chief first of all delivered the *exposé*<sup>2</sup> of German ideas on the political situation underlying the conduct of a future war, and on the conduct of this war itself. Following upon this, corresponding *exposés* were given by the Italian officers. These accorded in the main with the *exposé* set out in the record of the Head of the Operations Division of the Naval War Staff<sup>3</sup> on his conversation with Admiral Sansonetti. The need to confine the navy to the defensive task of holding the north-south line of Italy-Libya, was especially due to the very unfavourable situation in which Italy was placed in respect of numbers of battleships. That a considerable number of the enemy battleships would be tied up in the North Sea and in the Atlantic could not, in the Italian view, be taken for granted in view of the German fleet being at present still weak in this category of ship. Further, there would be a strong threat to the Dodecanese from the British in cooperation with Turkey (aerial threat), and to the Balearics from the French (surprise attack), though they hoped that both positions could be held since the Dodecanese were well fortified and Spain would defend the Balearics by all means. They would try to support the Spaniards. Nevertheless defence was the only possibility; and desirable as would be the use of the two island groups for offensive operations, this was excluded by the given balance of forces. The question was then raised of how to employ the strong Italian submarine fleet. It was stated that the intention was to employ about eighty vessels in the Mediterranean, ten in the Dodecanese, ten in the Red Sea and twelve (the largest type) in the Atlantic. Effectively to conduct a submarine war in the Atlantic was nevertheless only considered possible if Spanish bases were available. Four medium and four large submarines were to be employed against British oil transports from the Persian Gulf. Of the total Italian submarines, thirty-five vessels are constructed for employment in the tropics. The most modern vessels, that have been specially designed for war on commerce, will carry thirty-six torpedoes, the calibre of the torpedoes being reduced to the

<sup>1</sup> See also *D.D.I.*, Eighth Series, vol. XIII, Appendix IV.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. XI in this Appendix, and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> Captain Fricke. See document No. XIII in this Appendix.

45 cm., as adequate for war on commerce. For the conduct of war in the Indian Ocean the development of Kisimayu is especially important, as was explained with a map. Kisimayu can already be used for ancillary purposes as it possesses a natural well-sheltered harbour. Two batteries, and some supplies including fuel, are available. The ultimate objective is to station there twelve small and twelve large submarines, three cruisers and two fast tankers for war on commerce in the Indian Ocean. Storage for 10,000 tons of fuel is to be provided. Massawa is to be the chief base until Kisimayu is completed.

It emerged from these discussions that it would be necessary, both for the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, to agree, where occasion arose, on the delimitation of either side's sphere of operations to prevent mutual clashes. To the question as to whether the use of German heavy cruisers or capital ships in the Indian Ocean would disturb the Italian plans, the reply was in the negative.

Further operational details were then discussed. The Italians particularly stressed the advantage of employing the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau* in the Atlantic, because these ships would tie up enemy battle cruisers there and therefore free the ships of the *Cavour* class, which had been much improved through their reconstruction, from their only dangerous opponents in the Mediterranean. The reconstruction of the two *Dorias* (27 knots) would be completed in 1940 and the two *Littorios*, which were hoped to achieve a speed of 30-31 knots, would also be fit for service. In 1942, one hundred and forty-four submarines would be available. On the German side, in 1940 the *Tirpitz* and the *Bismarck* would be completed and three battleships of type H would be on the stocks. In 1944, we would have available over one hundred and eighty-eight submarines.

Here the conversations on operational questions ended, and the remaining points of the proposed programme were discussed.

#### *Communications Service :*

Cooperation is working excellently. A code must now be prepared for each tactical operation of naval forces and for cooperation between the two naval staffs.

#### *Italian naval bases for German auxiliary cruisers :*

Kisimayu will be made available as far as the limited facilities at present existing there permit. Accurate coastal charts can be supplied.

#### *Reciprocal attachment of officers to fleet exercises, etc. :*

In July Italian fleet exercises will be held in the Ionian Sea. There will follow gunnery practice (in the main torpedo practice) based on Spezia. German fleet exercises will be held in August and September. At the same time there will also be conversations on the exchange of experience in the field of training.

Also attachment of engineer officers if desired.

#### *Exchange of experience in the sphere of naval construction :*

A meeting of the heads of the appropriate offices, for June 28-29 in Berlin, was agreed on. Further work on details to be done by the subordinate offices.

#### *Merchant shipping in war :*

In the Italian view, normal commerce in the Mediterranean will practically cease on the outbreak of war. It would be very desirable if German tonnage located there could also be used (transport of troops, supplies to Libya, etc.). This was promised. It was specially requested that ships suitable for mine-laying should be made available to accomplish the task of barring the Sicilian Channel rapidly. It was pointed out from the German side that only specially built or prepared ships could be considered for mine-laying. Ours were all needed and were also so distributed in time of peace that they were readily available on the outbreak of war. However, it was promised that the question of the

suitability of German steamers normally employed in the Mediterranean for this purpose would be studied and, if necessary, advice on conversion and on the material required would be supplied.

The German side would attempt to maintain a certain amount of maritime commerce overseas also in wartime. Traffic in the Baltic is considered safe and would continue in full. Moreover, it would be important to maintain supplies from the Balkans.

The organization of information for merchant ships in war, and their direction in accordance with information received, is run on a different system by the Italians from ours. Exchange of experience and possibly the creation of a common system of communications is shortly to be discussed in Rome. At the same time there are to be discussions on all remaining questions of merchant shipping and collaboration in the field of communications.

*Material desired by the Italians :*

Anti-aircraft batteries, combined listening apparatus, aircraft catapults (details supplied elsewhere).

*Naval treaties and laws of naval warfare :*

Date for conversations is still to be agreed. The Italians promise to transmit confidentially the information reaching them on the British and French navies through the exchange of information under the naval Treaty between Britain and Italy. We guarantee to continue to transmit our data as provided for in the Treaty and previously supplied to Britain until the Treaty was denounced.<sup>4</sup>

*Creation of a liaison staff :*

No special liaison staff requires to be set up on the Italian side as the existing organization ensures that everything coming in or going out passes through the same central office.

*Spain :*

In view of the great strategical importance of Spain, both for Italy and for us, the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy requests that each side keep the other currently informed about conversations conducted with Spain, about agreements that may be reached, and about intentions. The Italians promise this. They had at the moment only an intelligence liaison staff there. The negotiations over Italian assistance in shipbuilding had failed. However, during the conversations with the Spanish mission in Rome,<sup>5</sup> they had gained the impression that the Spaniards were open to advice. The Commander-in-Chief requested that the Spaniards be induced to build up the Spanish Navy in a form useful to the common interests of all three States, also that, at first, light naval forces and commerce raiders should be constructed and, only later, battleships. The Italians took the same view and further believed that Spanish battleship construction (35,000 tons intended!) lay a long way off.

Here the conversations ended.

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<sup>4</sup> On Apr. 28, 1939. See this volume, document No. 277.

<sup>5</sup> No evidence as to these conversations has been found in the German archives. According to reports in the press, a delegation of Spanish officers arrived in Rome, at Mussolini's invitation, on May 5.

## XIII

8195/E592857-82

*Memorandum by the Head of Operations Division, Naval War Staff*

FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, June 21, 1939.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE ITALIAN ADMIRALS SANSONETTI AND DE COURTEN  
AND REAR-ADMIRAL SCHNIEWIND AND CAPTAIN FRICKE

Following the official talks<sup>1</sup> a conversation took place between these gentlemen about the strategical and operational considerations which Italy has so far put forward about the conduct of the war in the Mediterranean. Sansonetti obviously thought it important to make these statements, since he had presumably gathered from the remarks of the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy that the German Navy hoped that the Italian Navy, in their conduct of operations, would take the offensive in the Western Mediterranean; and had further gathered from a remark by the Head of the Operations Division, Naval War Staff, that the latter thought it doubtful whether a war on two fronts could be successfully waged in Libya.

Sansonetti said the Italians did *not* expect the French to transfer forces from North Africa to France in a future war. In North Africa, France would try to launch an offensive against Libya. Italy intended to remain on the defensive along the Tunisian-Libyan frontier and believed that, taking into account the existing fortifications and such still to be constructed, she could put the necessary forces into Libya in good time. As far as Egypt was concerned, the Italians were aiming at taking aggressive action against her. But in view of the fact that Britain's strength in the eastern Mediterranean had now been increased by her agreement with Turkey, it was possible that Italy would also have to remain on the defensive along the eastern frontier of Libya. It would emerge from further developments whether the Italians would be able to resort to offensive action on land and in the air against Egypt and the Suez Canal.

In any case, Italy considered the most important and urgent task of the Italian Navy to be to keep the sea route open between Italy and Libya. This central Mediterranean area was to be sealed off by minefields in the Sicilian Channel to the West, and secured by means of small-scale warfare and the air force operating from North Libya, Sicily, South Italy and Sardinia. In the East any British intention of interference from the eastern Mediterranean would be repulsed by the concentrated strength of the Italian naval forces. There was not thought to be a serious threat from the air forces in Malta and Bizerta.

This urgent task would not permit of conducting a simultaneous offensive in the western Mediterranean. Certainly the Italian Navy would seize upon every opportunity when the French Navy exposed itself to attack, for instance if French naval forces occupied the Balearics, but the Italians thought it impossible to conduct, at one and the same time, defensive action in the central Mediterranean against the British and an offensive in the western Mediterranean aimed at achieving command of the sea.

It was clear to the Italians that the Anglo-Turkish Treaty had made their task more difficult. They hoped that, by deploying troops from Albania, they could prevent the British from possibly gaining a footing in Greece. For this purpose they would not be able to exert any great pressure from the sea apart from submarine attacks.

So far Sansonetti's statements.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. XII in this Appendix.



The following may be said about them:

The position of the French in North Africa is very much stronger than that of the Italians in Libya. About 21 divisions of well trained and equipped men are stationed in North Africa. It seems hardly possible that the fortifications built by the Italians along the Tunisian-Libyan frontier could put up much resistance to a powerful attack. It would, therefore, only be a question of time before this front was breached. Should there be the slightest danger of this, then it is hardly possible to think of an unimpeded operation eastwards against Egypt—an attack which the great distances, difficult terrain and the lack of transport facilities would render prolonged and difficult. The direction of the French thrust from Tunisia is already, looked at psychologically, a tremendous handicap to an operation eastwards. If, during the period of tension, the Italians manage to throw into Libya a large number of troops not required for the land front in Europe, the position would certainly be improved, but the difficulty of getting supplies would also be increased.

Since the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish Treaty,<sup>2</sup> it cannot be expected that the British will evacuate the Eastern Mediterranean. The political repercussions in Arabia etc. would be immeasurable; on the contrary, we must expect active hostilities in the central Mediterranean.

Even supposing the Italians were to succeed in keeping the French out of Libya, in seizing Egypt, and in blocking the Suez Canal, this would still not be decisive. Even an inferior British fleet has, by virtue of its experience and traditions, many advantages over a numerically superior Italian fleet. French pressure from the West will prevent the Italians from keeping a strong superior force ready in the East. Nevertheless, there appear to be some prospects that the Italians, by an active conduct of the war, could exclude the French from the Western Mediterranean or at least force them to take refuge in the Atlantic. Possession of the Balearics and the link with Spain would provide the German-Italian direction of the war at sea with strategic possibilities which would have a decisive influence on the outcome of the war. Therefore we must see to it that in a combined war, Italy does not go running after all sorts of prestige targets (protection of Libya or taking possession of Tunisia or Egypt) but that, in the interests of our common goal, she displays the most vigorous activity in the Western Mediterranean and, at the same time, persists in the strategic defensive in the Eastern Mediterranean.

One aspect deserves special attention. Italy must be required to place an even stronger emphasis on naval expansion than is already the case in Germany. The tasks assigned to the Italian armed forces in future will stand or fall by the efficiency of the Navy, which will be supplemented by a correspondingly reorganized operational air force. The tasks of the Italian Army, apart from the Colonies, will not have the same decisive scope as those of the Navy and Air Force. The idea of such emphasis should be impressed upon the Italian Armed Forces and, just as the German Navy succeeded, the Italian Navy must secure from the highest authority this urgent expansion of the Italian Navy, and its supply with raw materials etc.

FR[ICK] 23/6

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<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Anglo-Turkish Declaration of May 12; see Editors' Note on p. 483.

## XIV

8195/E582847-50

*The Chief of Staff of the Naval War Staff to the OKW*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, June 24, 1939.

Sent June 26, 1939.

zu 1/Skl Ic 1174/39 g. Kds.<sup>2</sup>

Subject: German-Italian Naval Conversations.

Ref.:OKM 1/Skl. 1356 g. of May 17, 1939.<sup>3</sup>OKW 1393/39 g.K. WFA/L/(I) of June 20, 1939.<sup>2</sup>

The proposed conversations between the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and the Italian Admiral Cavagnari took place, as planned, at Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance on June 20 and 21. They were conducted on the Italian side with great frankness and without any apparent reservations.

There was no written joint undertaking. In general, agreement was reached on the following points:

1. Within the meaning of the Treaty of Alliance signed in Berlin on May 22, 1939, between the German Reich and the Kingdom of Italy, the German High Command of the Navy and the Royal Italian Ministry of Marine will already cooperate in peace-time in order to achieve, through mutual support, maximum fighting strength and war preparedness. In time of war, they will coordinate their operations in such a way as to ensure, with the means available for combat, the greatest possible success in their mutual war aims.

2. In view of the present situation, the following war time division of the sphere of operations is proposed:

(a) *North Sea, Baltic, Arctic Sea, Atlantic Ocean*

Sphere of operations for the German naval forces.

If Italian naval forces (submarines) are also employed in the Atlantic, the sphere of operations will be divided. This division is still to be agreed upon in detail.

(b) *Mediterranean, Black Sea, Red Sea*

Sphere of operations for the Italian naval forces.

(c) *Indian Ocean and Pacific*

According to forces available, the two Navies will jointly wage war on commerce in these waters. If considered necessary, a division of these spheres of operations will also be agreed upon.

(d) Since, in certain conditions, German naval forces operating in the Atlantic would be given increased possibilities by the use of Italian bases, the occasional posting for limited periods of German naval forces to Italian ports in peace time should be agreed in order to test collaboration in practice.

3. Since it is of vital importance for both navies that secrecy be preserved about the data mutually exchanged, detailed agreements on this will be concluded.

<sup>1</sup> Addressed to the Foreign Department and the National Defence Department of the OKW.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8195/E582846). In this communication the OKW requested that reports be supplied by the three Services on the results of, and their further intentions about, the Staff talks with Italy.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. VII and VIII in this Appendix.

4. Wherever possible, reciprocal attachment of officers, especially those in headquarters [*Kommandostellen*], will be arranged for manoeuvres.

5. Liaison between the intelligence services of both States will be promoted by their respective directors working immediately together.

6. To settle the extent of the exchange of experiences in the technical field (ship construction, arms) and in that of the intelligence services, the Heads of Departments concerned will meet forthwith (end of June, beginning of July), for fresh conversations.

7. The organization of the armaments industry in Germany is such that questions of mutual industrial assistance cannot in general be discussed alone with the Italian Ministry of Marine by the German Naval High Command, but the wishes of both sides will, as heretofore, be exchanged through the Naval Attachés.

S[CHNEIEWIND]

## Appendix II

### ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY<sup>1</sup>

THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER  
von Ribbentrop

- a) *Secretariat*: Head: Senior Counsellor Dr. Kordt (Erich)  
Minister Dr. Schmidt (Paul Otto)  
Counsellor Dr. Brücklmeier  
Legationssekretär Dr. Sonnleithner
- b) *Personal Staff*: Head: Senior Counsellor Hewel  
Senior Counsellor Dr. Schmidt (Paul Karl)  
Counsellor Likus  
Legationssekretär Gottfriedsen

THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY  
Freiherr von Weizsäcker

*Secretariat*: Counsellor Dr. Siegfried  
Counsellor von Kessel

THE HEAD OF THE AUSLANDSORGANISATION IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY  
State Secretary E. W. Bohle

STATE SECRETARY FOR SPECIAL DUTIES  
W. Keppler

AMBASSADOR FOR SPECIAL DUTIES  
Dr. Ritter

#### PROTOCOL DEPARTMENT

Head of Protocol: Minister Dr. Freiherr von Dörnberg  
Deputy Head: Counsellor of Legation Dr. von Halem  
Special Party Section: Counsellor Luther  
Special Section for Germany: Senior Counsellor Dr. Hinrichs

<sup>1</sup> Within the period covered by this volume a new organization plan appears to have been issued only for the Information and Press Department (P) with effect from July 1, 1939 (1780/406623-24); this is printed here together with a skeleton version of the organization plan for the other departments of the German Foreign Ministry (with effect from Feb. 15, 1939) as published in vol. IV of this Series. Changes which occurred during the period covered by this volume have been noted. An organization plan with effect from Dec. 1, 1937 is included in vol. I, from June 1, 1938, in vol. II, and from September, 1936 in vol. III.

## PERSONNEL AND BUDGET DEPARTMENT (PERS.)

Director of Department: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Prüfer (to April 1939)

Ministerialdirektor Kriebel (from April 1939)

Deputy Director: Minister Dr. Dienstmann as Ministerialdirigent (to April 1939)

Minister Schroeder as Ministerialdirigent (from April 1939)

## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (POL.)

Director of Department: Under State Secretary Dr. Woermann

Deputy Director: Minister Prince von Bismarck as Ministerialdirigent

Special Duties: Minister (unassigned) Freiherr von Richthofen (to May 1939)

Pol. I	League of Nations, military questions, armaments, aviation, defence:	Senior Counsellor von Kamp-hoevener, Counsellor Dr. Freiherr von der Heyden-Rynsch, Legationssekretär von Nostitz
Pol. Ia	Special duties:	Consul General (unassigned) Dr. von Luckwald
Pol. II	Western Europe:	Senior Counsellor von Rintelen
Pol. IIIa	Spain, Portugal:	Counsellor Dr. Schwendemann
Pol. IIIb	Vatican:	Counsellor Dr. Haidlen
Pol. IVa	Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy (Ethiopia, Libya), Yugoslavia, Rumania, Hungary:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Heinburg, Counsellor Dr. Mohrmann
Pol. IVb	Austria (Liquidation), Czechoslovakia:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Altenburg
Pol. V	Eastern Europe (Poland, Danzig, Soviet Union):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Schliep, Senior Counsellor Dr. Pacher-Theinburg, Counsellor Bergmann, Counsellor Meyer-Heydenhagen
Pol. VI	Scandinavia and Baltic States:	Senior Counsellor Dr. von Grundherr, Counsellor of Legation Dr. Doertenbach
Pol. VII	Near and Middle East:	Senior Counsellor Dr. von Hentig, Legationssekretär Dr. Schlobies
Pol. VIII	Far East and Australia:	Counsellor Dr. Knoll
Pol. IX	America:	Senior Counsellor Freytag, Counsellor of Legation von Schubert
Pol. X	Africa:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Bielfeld

Pol. MC	Matters connected with German property seized in the United States. German - American Mixed Claims Commission:	Minister (unassigned) Rohland
Pol. Grenz	Frontier Treaties and other technical questions concerning Reich frontiers, which are the subject of negotiations with foreign Governments:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Roediger (Conrad)

## ECONOMIC POLICY DEPARTMENT (W)

Director of Department: Ministerialdirektor Wiehl

Deputy Director: Minister Dr. Clodius as Ministerialdirigent

Directly subordinate to Head of Department:

Leader of Delegations for Commercial Treaties: Minister Dr. Hemmen

W	I	General section for questions concerning economics and finance:	....., Legationssekretär Dr. Pawelke
W	II	Western and Southern Europe (excluding Great Britain and Italy):	Senior Counsellor Sabath, Counsellor Dr. Kreutzwald
W	III	South East Europe including Italy and the Near East:	Senior Counsellor Moraht, Counsellor Dr. Ripken
W	IV	Eastern Europe:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Schnurre
W	V	Northern Europe:	Counsellor Dr. van Scherpenberg
W	VI	Great Britain, Dominions and British possessions (excluding Canada):	Senior Counsellor Rüter
W	VII	Far East:	Counsellor Dr. Voss
W	VIII	America:	
	a)	North America including Canada and Mexico:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Davidsen
	b)	South America including Central America:	Counsellor Dr. Becker
W	IX	Shipping:	Senior Counsellor Bleyert
W	X	Reich Office for Foreign Trade:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Wingen
W	XI	Raw materials:	Senior Counsellor Bisse
W	XII	General transport questions:	Minister Dr. Martius

## LEGAL DEPARTMENT (R)

Director of Department: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gaus

Deputy Director: Senior Counsellor Dr. Albrecht

## CULTURAL POLICY DEPARTMENT (KULT.)

Director of Department: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Stieve (to June 1939)

Deputy Director: Senior Counsellor Dr. von Twardowski (Director from June 1939)  
Senior Counsellor Rühle (from June 1939)

## INFORMATION AND PRESS DEPARTMENT (P)

Director of Department: Minister Aschmann (to April 1939)

Acting Director of Department: Senior Counsellor Dr. P. K. Schmidt (from April 1939)

Attached:	1) As personal assistant:	Dr. Steinbichl
	2) For official announcements by the Foreign Ministry and liaison with the German daily press:	Attaché Lohse
Special duty:	<i>Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz:</i>	Minister Braun von Stumm
P. Gen.	Organization and routine, including protocol questions of the Department. International press agreements:	Counsellor Dr. Hellenthal
P. Ausl.	Press advisers and foreign correspondents:	Ministerialrat (retd.) Dr. Jahncke
P. Information	Material for press and political campaigns. Information for German Missions. German periodicals. Reference Library of the Department:	Referent H. Kleinlein
Special duties:	General questions affecting South East Europe:	Minister (unassigned) Dr. Kirchholtes
P I	England, Ireland, South Africa, British possessions (if not dealt with elsewhere), German colonies:	Legationssekretär Leithe-Jasper
P II	France and French possessions; Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxembourg:	Senior Counsellor von Eckhardt
P III	Spain, Portugal, Vatican, Italy (Albania, Ethiopia, Libya):	Counsellor Ritter von Zeileissen
P IV	Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Slovakia, Hungary:	Minister (unassigned) Dr. Schwörbel
P V	Eastern Europe (Poland, Danzig, Soviet Union):	Legationssekretär Dr. Staudacher
P VI	Scandinavia and the Baltic States:	Legationssekretär Dr. Schlemann
P VII	Near and Middle East (including British India):	Minister (unassigned) Dr. Schwörbel
P VIII	Far East; Australia, New Zealand; Indo-China and Netherlands East Indies:	Referent Prince Urach
P IX	United States; Canada; Central and South America:	Consul General (unassigned) Dr. Soehring, Referent Dr. Sallet
P X	Foreign and German press archives:	Counsellor Dr. Busse
P XI	Press conferences and reports:	Dr. Schacht

## Appendix III

### LIST OF GERMAN FILES USED

The following table identifies the German file from which each document has been derived. The documents of the Foreign Ministry were bound into volumes by the Germans. The documents in these volumes have been microfilmed, and each film of a file has been identified by a film serial number, while each page of the documents has been identified by a frame number stamped on the original at the time of filming. The documents published in this collection are identified by the film serial number and frame numbers in the upper left-hand corner of each document. By reference to the following table of film serial numbers the location in the German Foreign Ministry archives of the copy of the document used in this publication may be determined. In some few cases separate files, usually on closely related topics, have been filmed consecutively under a single serial number; these are marked by an asterisk(\*). A number of serials are given as supplementary to earlier ones; these are cases where a re-examination of the file in question indicated that additional filming might be useful to scholars or, as is more often the case, where in the process of editing for publication the editors wished to provide a film record of documents of lesser importance to which references appeared in the documents selected.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
B 18	State Secretary: Finland.
B 21	State Secretary: United States of America.
22	State Secretary: Norway.
28	German Legation in Czechoslovakia: Secret Papers—Telegrams to and from the Foreign Ministry and other authorities.
33	Director, Political Department: [Files on Visits of Foreign Statesmen].*
34	State Secretary: U.S.S.R.: Negotiations; Economy; Non-Aggression Pact. Under State Secretary: U.S.S.R.*
43	Dienststelle Ribbentrop: Confidential Reports.
49	Head of the Auslandsorganisation: United States of America.
52	State Secretary: Poland.
53	State Secretary: Conference of the Heads of Missions in South America.
54	State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Non-Diplomatic Personages.
57	Under State Secretary: United States of America.
66	Paul Otto Schmidt: Papers.
71	State Secretary: Arabia; Saudi-Arabia.
73	State Secretary: Hungary.
C 82	Reich Chancellery: Great Britain.
96	State Secretary: Turkey.
97	State Secretary: Danzig.
100	German Embassy in Italy: Mackensen Papers.
103	State Secretary: U.S.S.R.
115	Reich Foreign Minister: Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Latvia; Luxembourg; Memel; Austria.
116	Reich Foreign Minister: Africa; Albania; Danzig; Estonia; Croatia.
119	Head of the Auslandsorganisation: Yugoslavia; Italy.*



*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 121 State Secretary: German-French Relations.
- 127 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with Germany.
- 129 State Secretary: Portugal.
- 136 State Secretary: German-Spanish Relations.
- 141 State Secretary: Belgium.
- 147 Reich Foreign Minister: Poland; Conflict with Poland; Poland-Danzig, with exchange of Notes on Polish Customs Inspectors.\*
- 158 Pol. VIII: Political Relations of Japan with the United States of America.
- 168 Under State Secretary: Spain.
- 169 State Secretary: Rumania.
- 174 State Secretary: Japan.
- 183 State Secretary: Switzerland.
- 212 Pol. VIII: China—Particulars of politicians.
- 215 German Embassy in the Soviet Union: Internal Politics of the Soviet Union (Military, Naval, Air); Political Relations between Germany and England (Encirclement Policy); Political Relations of Germany with the Baltic States; Political Relations of Germany with the Balkan States (Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Rumania) and Turkey; Russian Policy (Emigrants); International Political Problems—Bolshevism, Socialism.
- 230 State Secretary: Yugoslavia.
- 258 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Anglo-Soviet Political Relations (British encirclement policy, guarantees, pact negotiations with U.S.S.R., Turkey etc.).
- 259 State Secretary: Anglo-German Relations.
- 276 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Schulenburg Special Political File.
- 321 State Secretary: Lithuania.
- 331 Under State Secretary: Protectorate.
- 350 Under State Secretary: Slovakia.
- 351 Pol. V: U.S.S.R.—Foreign Policy: General.
- 375 State Secretary: Great Britain—Halifax visit and its consequences.
- 388 Pol. V: Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with Germany.
- 401 Under State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
- 406 State Secretary: Estonia.
- 414 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Protectorate.
- 419 State Secretary: Foreign Propaganda; Press.
- 427 State Secretary: Protectorate, Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine.
- 429 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with the Northern States—Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark; Aaland Question, Finnish Islands.
- 449 State Secretary: Greece.
- 452 State Secretary: Political Correspondence of the State Secretary with Officials of the Foreign Service.
- 462 German Embassy in Spain, Secret: Anti-Comintern Pact.
- 466 German Embassy in the Soviet Union: Secret. Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with the Baltic States.
- 472 State Secretary: Political Correspondence of the State Secretary with Officials of the Foreign Service.
- 483 State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.
- 485 State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.
- 493 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Internal Politics etc.

*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 495 State Secretary: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.
- 504 Pol. IV: Yugoslavia—Foreign Policy: General.
- 509 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Yugoslavia with Germany.
- 511 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Yugoslavia with Germany—Exchanges of Visits by Statesmen.
- 524 Pol. Geheim: U.S.S.R.—Political Affairs.
- 533 State Secretary: Relations with the Holy See.
- 553 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—South Africa.
- 583 State Secretary: German-Italian Relations.
- 584 Pol. IV: Italy—Resettlement Question: S. Tyrol.
- 585 State Secretary: Bulgaria.
- 610 State Secretary: Slovakia.
- 621 Pol. II: Political Relations of France with Germany.
- 623 State Secretary: Albania.
- 650 Pol. III: Political Relations of Spain with Germany.
- 695 Supplementary to 127.
- 799 Under State Secretary: Poland-Danzig.
- 908 Pol. Geheim: Poland—Political Affairs.
- 909 Pol. Geheim: Poland—Political Affairs.
- 1121 Pol. I M.: Abwehr—Far East.
- 1231 Reichsminister Frank: Papers.
- 1256 Pol. V: Political Relations of Poland with the U.S.S.R.
- 1408 Pol. II: Great Britain—Foreign Policy: General.
- 1504 Hewel Papers: Germany E-H.
- 1522 Reich Chancellery: Poland.
- 1546 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Italy with Yugoslavia.
- 1548 Hewel Papers: Germany T-Z.
- 1570 Supplementary to 121.
- 1571 Supplementary to 583.
- 1576 Pol. VI: Baltic Entente.
- 1580 Pol. II: Political Relations of Great Britain with France.
- 1585 Pol. II: Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany.
- 1588 Pol. Geheim: Spain—Political Affairs.
- 1593 Pol. VII: Political Relations of Turkey with Germany.
- 1605 Pol. VII: Political Relations of Saudi Arabia with Germany.
- 1625 Pol. II: British Attempt to build an anti-German Group of Powers.
- 1637 Pol. I M.: Anglo-German Naval Negotiations.
- 1724 Pol. V: Political Relations of Danzig with Poland.
- 1751 Pol. VI: Political Relations of Estonia with the U.S.S.R.
- 1785 Pol V: Exchanges of Visits by German and Polish Statesmen.
- 1796 Under State Secretary: Encirclement.
- 1818 Pol. V: Political Relations of Poland with Germany.
- 1836 Pol. V: Political Relations with Poland—Joint Declarations on Minorities.
- 1848 Supplementary to 583.
- 1880 Pol. II: Netherlands—Military Affairs.
- 1929 State Secretary: Sino-Japanese War.
- 1941 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Germany.
- 1969 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Carpatho-Ukraine with Hungary.
- 1975 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Rumania with Hungary.
- 2000 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—America.
- 2002 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Slovakia with Germany.
- 2005 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Great Britain.

*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 2006 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Slovakia with Hungary.
- 2025 Pol. II: Political Relations of Switzerland with Germany.
- 2050 State Secretary: Protectorate, Slovakia and Carpatho-Ukraine.
- 2058 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Italy.
- 2092 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—U.S.S.R.
- 2102 Pol. V: Poland—Political Relations of Poland with the United States; Ukraine; Political Tours of Polish Statesmen; Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties; Racial Questions.
- 2104 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Rumania.
- 2130 German Embassy in Italy: Secret Papers (1939).
- 2134 Supplementary to 483, 485, 495.
- 2140 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Hungary.
- 2153 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Turkey.
- 2162 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Yugoslavia.
- 2166 Supplementary to 375.
- 2180 Under State Secretary: RAM in Italy in May 1939 and Ciano in Berlin etc.
- 2184 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Albania with Italy.
- 2185 State Secretary: Memoranda on Internal Directives, Views on Specific Questions, Telephone Conversations etc.
- 2196 Supplementary to 452 and 472.
- 2208 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—U.S.S.R.
- 2261 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Rumania.
- 2271 Pol. IV: Bulgaria—Jewish Questions.
- 2276 Pol. Geheim: Slovakia—Political Affairs.
- 2281 German Embassy in Italy: Secret Papers (1940, 1941).
- 2313 State Secretary: Czechoslovakia.
- 2333 Supplementary to 1625.
- 2381 Pol. IV: Czechoslovakia—Political Relations between Czechoslovakia and Hungary, between Carpatho-Ukraine and Germany, between Carpatho-Ukraine and Hungary.\*
- 2386 Pol. V: Poland—Military Affairs.
- 2389 Pol. V: Danzig—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 2399 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl papers—Political Matters.
- 2410 Pol. IV: Italy—Racial Questions, Nationalities Questions, Foreign Elements, South Tyrol Questions.
- 2422 Pol. IX: Political Relations of the USA with Germany.
- 2446 Inland IIg: Secret Papers of Kult. A.
- 2448 Supplementary to 2261.
- 2450 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Bulgaria.
- 2467 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—France.
- 2481 Pol. IV: Yugoslavia—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 2561 Under State Secretary: Switzerland.
- 2590 Inland IIg: Secret Papers of Kult. A.
- 2609 Pol. VI: Aaland.
- 2642 Pol. VI: Schleswig—Germans Abroad.
- 2715 Pol. VIII: China—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 2723 Supplementary to 427, 2050 and 2313.
- 2767 Supplementary to 1625.
- 2768 Pol. VI: Political Relations of Denmark with Germany.
- 2770 Pol. II: Political Relations of Great Britain with the U.S.S.R.
- 2771 Supplementary to 1796.
- 2781 Hewel Papers: The Anglo-German Society.

*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 2791 Economic Policy Division VI: Trade Treaty Relations of Great Britain with Germany.
- 2795 Supplementary to 452, 2196.
- 2796 Pol. II: France—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 2798 Supplementary to 121, 1570.
- 2801 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with Spain; Exchange of Prisoners.
- 2810 Pol. IX: United States of America—Germans abroad.
- 2814 Pol. II: France—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 2819 German Embassy in France: Protectorate—former Czech Representation.
- 2821 Pol. V: Poland—Excesses against Reich Germans and Volksdeutsche in Poland.
- 2842 Pol. V: German Community in Poland.
- 2846 Pol. V: Poland—Military Affairs.
- 2871 Political Department: Treaties, 1936–1944.
- 2883 Pol. IV: International Political Problems—The Revisionist Question.
- 2886 Pol. IV: Non-Aggression Pact with the Northern States.
- 2892 German Embassy in Poland: Dissolution of Czechoslovakia.
- 2894 Pol. VI: Memel—Political Relations of Memel with Germany.
- 2897 Pol. V: Danzig—Political Relations of Danzig with Poland; Uniform Questions; Naval Affairs.\*
- 2898 Pol. VIII: Political Relations of Japan with Germany.
- 2902 Pol. VI: Political Relations of Sweden with Germany.
- 2903 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Lithuania Treaty Texts.
- 2904 Supplementary to 2006.
- 2908 German Embassy in Poland: Political Reports.
- 2927 German Embassy in Poland: Top Secret Matters.
- 2928 Supplementary to 472.
- 2931 Pol. VIII: Political Relations of China with Japan.
- 2943 Supplementary to 2609.
- 2950 Supplementary to 2153.
- 2951 Supplementary to 100.
- 2981 Supplementary to 452, 472, 2196, 2795.
- 2984 Supplementary to 2410.
- 2986 Pol. IV: Hungary—National Socialism; Fascism and similar movements, middle class defence against radical left wing movements.
- 2989 Pol. IX: Political Relations of the United States of America with Foreign Powers.
- 2993 Pol. IX: United States of America—Neutrality Questions.
- 2997 Pol. IX: United States of America—Heads of States and their Families.
- 3000 Supplementary to 583, 1571.
- 3013 Supplementary to 2006, 2904.
- 3021 Pol. III: Holy See—Papal and Catholic Propaganda.
- 3023 Supplementary to 2446.
- 3028 Pol. IV: Rumania—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 3039 Pol. IV: The Balkans—International Political Problems.
- 3041 Pol. IV: German Community in Yugoslavia.
- 3043 Pol. IV: Yugoslavia—Political Relations with Germany; State Visits.
- 3053 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Yugoslavia.
- 3062 Supplementary to 495 and 2134.
- 4011 German Embassy in Poland: Letters from Wühlisch.

*Film Serial*

<i>Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
4992	Economic Policy Division VIIla: United States of America—Imports, Exports and Transit Trade, general and basic questions.
5209	Economic Policy Division III: Italy—Coal.
5253	Supplementary to 1625, 2767.
5454	Supplementary to 584.
5455	Supplementary to 2886.
5456	Pol. V: Poland—Criminal Prosecutions.
5457	Supplementary to 2609, 2943.
5459	Press Department: United States of America—Press Surveys.
5460	Supplementary to 2208.
5461	Economic Policy Division VI: Economic Relations of Great Britain with the U.S.S.R.
5482	Göring Personal Staff [ <i>Stabsamt</i> ]—Reports on Foreign Countries (1933-1939).
5555	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—Rumania.
5556	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—Rumania.
5558	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—Bulgaria.
5558	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—Greece.
5569	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—Italy.
5570	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—Yugoslavia.
5841	Economic Policy Division VI: Economic Relations between Great Britain and Germany; also Supplementary to 5461.
5842	Economic Policy Division VI: Great Britain—Economic Situation.
5843	Economic Policy Division VI: Great Britain—Industry: General.
5849	Press Department: Great Britain—Miscellaneous.
5985	Supplementary to 1975.
6402	Supplementary to 4992.
6519	Economic Policy Division VI: Economic Relations of Great Britain with Poland.
6563	Supplementary to 4992.
6564	Supplementary to 5459.
6570	Pol. I Vbd.: South Africa.
6640	Economic Policy Department: Bulgaria—Treaties.
6783	Economic Policy Department, Secret: Trade in War Material—The Netherlands.
7032	Pol. V: Danzig—Legal.
7063	German Legation in Rumania: Political Relations of Rumania with Hungary.
7182	Economic Policy Division III: Rumania—Trade.
7249	German Consulate General at Danzig: Conversations with the High Commissioner.
7261	German Consulate General at Danzig: League of Nations and High Commissioner.
7327	Economic Policy Department: Turkey—Treaties.
7368	German Legation in Hungary: German-Hungarian Conversations on Settlement of Minorities Question.
7481	Supplementary to 1593.
7482	Economic Policy Division II: France—Trade Treaty Negotiations with Germany.
7483	Supplementary to 4992.
7484	Economic Policy Division VIIla: United States of America—Trade Treaty Relations with Germany.

*Film Serial**Numbers**Title of File*

- 7485 Economic Policy Division VIIIa: United States of America—Trade Treaty Relations with Germany.
- 7486 German Legation in Rumania: Political Relations of Rumania with Germany.
- 7487 Economic Policy Division III: Economic Relations of Rumania with Czechoslovakia.
- 7488 Supplementary to 485, 2134, 3062.
- 7489 Pol. IV: International Political Problems—Little Entente.
- 7490 Supplementary to 2006, 2904, 3013.
- 7491 Supplementary to 1941.
- 7492 Supplementary to 1625, 2767, 5453.
- 7493 Supplementary to 1975, 5985.
- 7563 Pol. Geheim: France—Political Affairs.
- 7587 Pol. IV: Political Relations of Carpatho-Ukraine with Germany; also Supplementary to 2381.
- 7634 Economic Policy Division III: Southern Europe—Economic Relations with Germany.
- 7635 Supplementary to 1975, 5985, 7493.
- 7637 Supplementary to 1625, 2767, 5453.
- 7693 Pol. V: Danzig—Customs.
- 7795 German Legation in Estonia: Political Relations of Estonia with Germany.
- 7796 Supplementary to 2986.
- 7798 Supplementary to 1625, 2767, 5453, 7637.
- 7799 Pol. V: Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with Turkey.
- 7800 Pol. IX: Political Relations of the United States of America with Germany; also Supplementary to 2422.
- 7801 Pol. IX: Roosevelt's Peace Appeal; also Supplementary to 2422.
- 7802 German Legation in Estonia: Political Questions.
- 7848 Supplementary to 1625, 2767, 5453, 7492.
- 7884 Supplementary to 2410, 2984.
- 7885 German Embassy in Italy: South Tyrol.
- 7886 Legal Department: Intercessions.
- 7891 Supplementary to 1625, 2767.
- 7895 Supplementary to 5556.
- 7981 Economic Policy Division VI: Great Britain—Miscellaneous.\*
- 7994 Press Department: Great Britain.
- 7995 German Embassy in the Soviet Union, Secret: Political Relations of the U.S.S.R. with Japan.
- 7996 Supplementary to 2153, 2950.
- 7999 German Legation in Rumania: Rumania—Foreign Policy.
- 8000 Supplementary to 2796.
- 8001 Pol. V: High Commissioner in Danzig.
- 8002 German Embassy in Italy: Political Relations of Italy with Germany.
- 8004 Supplementary to 2886, 5455.
- 8005 Economic Policy Department: Treaties with Poland.
- 8006 Economic Policy Department: Treaties with Poland.
- 8007 Supplementary to 2883.
- 8042 Supplementary to 584, 5454.
- 8043 Supplementary to 2768.
- 8044 German Legation in Latvia: Neutrality of the Baltic States.
- 8045 Economic Policy Department: Yugoslavia—Treaties.
- 8049 Pol. V: Danzig—Frontier violations; Kalthof Incident.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
8056	Economic Policy Department: Italy—Treaties.
8131	Supplementary to 2821.
8195	Naval Archives: 1 SKL, I.C. 1—German-Italian Cooperation.
8196	Economic Policy Division XII: World Postal Congress in Buenos Aires, 1939.
8198	Supplementary to 452, 2196, 2795, 2981.
8200	Supplementary to 1605.
8201	Supplementary to 2153, 2950, 7996.
8203	German Embassy in France: France—Internal Affairs.
8204	Pol. VIII: Foreign Settlements and Concessions in China—other than Shanghai.
8230	Naval Archives: 1 SKL, I, Op. 29-1: Cooperation between Germany and Italy, Spain, Japan, U.S.S.R., Hungary, Rumania.
8265	German Consulate General at Danzig: Political Relations of Germany with Poland.
8270	Supplementary to 472, 2196.
8271	Supplementary to 121, 1570, 2798.
8272	Pol. I Vbd.: Yugoslavia.
8273	Pol. I M.: Movements of Warships.
8274	Pol. V: Poland—Racial Questions, Nationalities Questions, Foreign Elements; also Supplementary to 2102.
8275	German Embassy in Italy: Bulgaria.
8276	German Legation in Denmark: South and North Schleswig.
8277	Supplementary to 2908.
8278	German Embassy in Poland: Papers recently received, 1939.
8287	German Consulate General at Danzig: Visit of Cruisers <i>Königsberg</i> or <i>Schleswig-Holstein</i> .
8353	Legal Department: Slovakia—Treaty Negotiations.
8355	Economic Policy Division III: Bulgaria—Supplies.
8356	German Embassy in Italy: Visits—General File.
8357	Supplementary to 7999.
8358	Pol. V: Danzig—Uniform Questions; also Supplementary to 2897.
8359	Supplementary to 1724.
8360	Pol. IX: United States of America—Neutrality Questions.
8361	Supplementary to 8204.
8362	Supplementary to 1605, 8200.
8363	Supplementary to 472, 2196, 8270.
8368	German Embassy in Poland: Papers recently received, 1939.
8375	Economic Policy Division VI: Great Britain—Trade Treaty Relations with Germany—Protectorate, also Supplementary to 7981.
8386	Legal Department: Norway—Neutrality.
8391	Supplementary to 121, 1570, 2798, 8271.
8417	German Embassy in Italy: Adolf Hitler—Parade on the Führer's Fiftieth Birthday.
8418	Supplementary to 8272.
8419	German Legation in Yugoslavia: Political Relations of Yugoslavia with Germany.
8420	German Embassy in Italy: Political Relations of Italy with Germany—Special File; Göring Visit.
8422	Supplementary to 2801.
8424	Supplementary to 8273.
8436	Supplementary to 1585.

*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 8439 German Legation in Lithuania: Political Relations of Lithuania with Poland.
- 8440 Supplementary to 504.
- 8441 Supplementary to 584, 5454, 8042.
- 8442 Press Department: Denmark.
- 8444 Pol. V: Danzig—Frontier Violations.
- 8449 Economic Policy Division III: Rumania—Petroleum.
- 8450 Economic Policy Division III: Rumania—Mining and Foundries.
- 8452 Supplementary to 2153, 2950, 7996, 8201.
- 8464 Supplementary to 2846.
- 8467 Economic Policy Division III: Economic Relations between Foreign States; Bohemia—Moravia.
- 8471 German Consulate General at Danzig: The Polish Element in Danzig.
- 8475 Supplementary to 2796.
- 8476 Supplementary to 1408.
- 8495 Supplementary to 5456.
- 8501 Supplementary to 8356.
- 8516 Supplementary to 3039.
- 8556 Supplementary to 495, 2134, 3062.
- 8913 Supplementary to 2422, 7801.
- 8920 German Embassy in Rumania: Decorations Questions, Special.
- F1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 19: German Foreign Ministry film of files of the Reich Foreign Minister's Secretariat. (See the General Introduction to this Series, published in volumes I-IV, Section II.)



## Appendix IV

### LIST OF PERSONS<sup>1</sup>

- ABETZ, Otto, Paris representative of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop until July 1939.
- ALPHAND, Hervé, Director of the Trade Agreements Division of the French Ministry of Commerce.
- ALTENBURG, Günther, Head of Political Division IVb (Austria and Czechoslovakia) in the German Foreign Ministry.
- ANDRIĆ, Ivo, Yugoslav Minister in Germany from April 1939.
- ARCISZEWSKI, Miroslaw, Assistant Under-Secretary of State in the Polish Foreign Ministry.
- ARITA, Hachiro, Japanese Foreign Minister.
- ARPAÇ, Mehmet Hamdi, Turkish Ambassador in Germany.
- ASCHMANN, Gottfried, Director of the Information and Press Department of the German Foreign Ministry until April 1939.
- ASTAKHOV, Georgi, Counsellor of the Soviet Embassy in Germany.
- ATTOLICO, Bernardo, Italian Ambassador in Germany.
- AURITI, Giacinto, Italian Ambassador in Japan.
- BABARIN, E., Soviet Trade Representative in Germany from June 1939.
- BECK, Józef, Colonel, Polish Foreign Minister.
- BENE, Otto, German Consul General at Milan.
- BENEŠ, Eduard, President of the Czechoslovak Republic 1935-1938.
- BERGEN, Diego von, German Ambassador to the Holy See.
- BERNARD, Hans, German Minister in Slovakia from July 1939.
- BLÜCHER, Wipert von, German Minister in Finland.
- BOHLE, Ernst Wilhelm, Gauleiter and Head of the Auslandsorganisation of the NSDAP; State Secretary in the German Foreign Ministry.
- BONNET, Georges, French Foreign Minister.
- BORIS III, King of Bulgaria.
- BÖTTCHER, Viktor, Staatsrat, Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Danzig Senate.
- BRAUCHITSCH, Walter von, Colonel General, Commander-in-Chief of the German Army.
- BRÄUER, Curt, Counsellor of the German Embassy in France.
- BUJOIU, Ion, Rumanian Minister of Economics.
- BULLITT, William C., United States Ambassador in France.
- BÜLOW-SCHWANTE, Vicco von, German Ambassador in Belgium.
- BURCKHARDT, Carl, League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig.
- BUTLER, Richard Austen, British Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
- CĂLINESCU, Armand, Rumanian Minister President, Minister of the Interior and of National Defence.
- CANARIS, Wilhelm, Admiral, Head of the Intelligence Department [*Abt. Abwehr*] of the OKW.
- CAROL II, King of Rumania.
- ČERNÁK, Matúš, Slovak Minister in Germany.

<sup>1</sup> The particulars here given relate principally to the period and subjects covered by the documents in this volume.

- CHAMBERLAIN, Neville, British Prime Minister.
- CHODACKI, Marjan, Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig.
- CHURCHILL, Winston Spencer, British Conservative M.P.
- CHVALKOVSKÝ, František, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister until March 1939; subsequently Minister in Germany.
- CIANO DI CORTELLAZZO, Galeazzo Count, Italian Foreign Minister.
- CINCAR-MARKOVIĆ, Aleksandar, Yugoslav Foreign Minister.
- CLODIUS, Carl, Deputy Director of the Economic Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry.
- COULONDRE, Robert, French Ambassador in Germany.
- CRAIGIE, Sir Robert, British Ambassador in Japan.
- CRETZIANU, Alexandru, Secretary General of the Rumanian Foreign Ministry.
- CSÁKY, Count István, Hungarian Foreign Minister.
- CVETKOVIĆ, Dragiša, Yugoslav Minister President.
- DALADIER, Edouard, French Minister President and Minister of National Defence.
- DIRKSEN, Herbert von, German Ambassador in Great Britain.
- DRAGANOV, Parván, Bulgarian Minister in Germany.
- DRUFFEL, Ernst von, Consul General at Bratislava and Chargé d'Affaires in Slovakia, March-July 1939.
- ĎURČANSKÝ, Ferdinand, Slovak Foreign Minister from March 1939.
- EDEN, Anthony, British Conservative M.P.
- ERBACH-SCHÖNBERG, Viktor Prinz zu, German Minister in Greece.
- ERDMANNSDORFF, Otto von, German Minister in Hungary.
- ERKKO, Eljas, Finnish Foreign Minister.
- FABRICIUS, Wilhelm, German Minister in Rumania.
- FLANDIN, Pierre Etienne, Leader of the French Left Republican Party.
- FOERSTER, Richard, Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy, 1934-1936.
- FORSTER, Albert, Gauleiter of Danzig.
- FRANCO Y BAHAMONDE, Francisco, General, Head of the Spanish State, President of the Government and Generalissimo of the Army, Navy and Air Force.
- FRANÇOIS-PONCET, André, French Ambassador in Italy.
- FRÖLICHER, Hans, Swiss Minister in Germany.
- FROHWEIN, Hans, German Minister in Estonia.
- FUNK, Walter, Reich Minister of Economics; President of the Reichsbank.
- GAFENCU, Grigore, Rumanian Foreign Minister.
- GAUS, Friedrich, Director of the Legal Department of the German Foreign Ministry.
- GIANNINI, Amedeo, Director General of the Commercial Department of the Italian Foreign Ministry.
- GOEBBELS, Josef, Reich Minister of Propaganda.
- GÖRING, Hermann Wilhelm, Field Marshal, Reich Minister for Air; Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe; Commissioner for the Four Year Plan.
- GREISER, Arthur, President of the Danzig Senate and Senator for Foreign Affairs.
- GROBBA, Fritz, German Minister in Iraq; accredited also to Saudi Arabia.
- GRUNDHERR, Werner von, Head of Political Division VI (Scandinavia and the Baltic States) in the German Foreign Ministry.
- HÁCHA, Emil, President of the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.
- HALIFAX, Viscount, Edward Wood, British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
- HEEREN, Viktor von, German Minister in Yugoslavia.
- HENDERSON, Sir Nevile, British Ambassador in Germany.
- HEWEL, Walter, permanent representative of the Reich Foreign Minister with the Führer; Head of the Reich Foreign Minister's Personal Staff.

- HEYDRICH, Reinhard, SS-Gruppenführer, Chief of the Reich Security Head Office and of the German Security Police (incorporating the Secret State Police and the Criminal Police).
- HILGER, Gustav, in charge of economic affairs at the German Embassy in the Soviet Union.
- HIMMLER, Heinrich, Reichsführer-SS and Chief of the German Police.
- HIRANUMA, Baron Kiichiro, Japanese Minister President.
- HITLER, Adolf, Chancellor of the German Reich; Head of the State with the title of Führer and Chancellor of the Reich; Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht.
- HOOVER, Herbert, President of the United States 1929-1933.
- HORTHY DE NAGYBÁNYA, Miklós, Admiral, Regent of Hungary.
- HOYNINGEN-HUENE, Oswald Baron von, German Minister in Portugal.
- HUDSON, Robert Spear, Parliamentary Secretary to the British Department of Overseas Trade.
- HULL, Cordell, United States Secretary of State.
- IBN SAUD, King of Saudi Arabia.
- INÖNÜ, Ismet, General, President of Turkey.
- ITAGAKI, Seishiro, General, Japanese Minister of War.
- JANSON, Martin von, German Consul General at Danzig.
- JORDANA, Francisco Gomez, Count, Spanish Foreign Minister.
- KEITEL, Wilhelm, Colonel General, Chief of the OKW.
- KENNARD, Sir Howard, British Ambassador in Poland.
- KENNEDY, Joseph P., United States Ambassador in Great Britain.
- KEPPLE, Wilhelm, State Secretary for special duties in the German Foreign Ministry.
- KROSSEIVANOV, Gheorgi, Bulgarian Minister President and Foreign Minister.
- KIRK, Alexander C., United States Counsellor of Embassy and Chargé d'Affaires in Germany from May 1939.
- KNATCHBULL-HUGESSEN, Sir Hughe, British Ambassador in Turkey.
- KÖCHER, Otto, German Minister in Switzerland.
- KORDT, Erich, Senior Counsellor in the Reich Foreign Minister's Secretariat.
- KORDT, Theodor, Counsellor of the German Embassy in Great Britain; Chargé d'Affaires during the absence of Ambassador Dirksen.
- KOTZE, Hans Ulrich von, German Minister in Latvia.
- KRAUEL, Wolfgang, German Consul General at Geneva.
- KREEVINŠ, Edgars, Latvian Minister in Germany.
- KROLL, Hans, Counsellor of the German Embassy in Turkey.
- LANGMANN, Otto, German Minister in Uruguay.
- LEBRUN, Albert, President of the French Republic.
- LIKUS, Rudolf, official of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop; on the Foreign Minister's Personal Staff from March 1939.
- LIPSKI, Józef, Polish Ambassador in Germany.
- LITVINOV, Maxim, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union until May 1939.
- LORRAINE, Sir Percy, British Ambassador in Italy from May 1939.
- LORENZ, Werner, SS-Obergruppenführer, Head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle.
- MAČEK, Vladimir, Leader of the Croat Peasant Party.
- MACKENSEN, Hans Georg von, German Ambassador in Italy.
- MAGISTRATI, Massimo, Count, Counsellor of the Italian Embassy in Germany.
- MAGLIONE, Luigi, Cardinal, Cardinal Secretary of State from March 1939.
- MENEMENÇIOĞLU, Numan, Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry.
- MEREKALOV, Alexei, Soviet Ambassador in Germany.
- METAXAS, Ioannis, General, Greek Minister President and Foreign Minister.

- MIKOYAN, Anastas, People's Commissar for Foreign Trade of the Soviet Union.
- MILCH, Erhard, Colonel-General, State Secretary in the Reich Ministry for Air; Inspector General of the Luftwaffe.
- MOLOTOV, Vyacheslav, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union; People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs from May 1939.
- MOLTKE, Hans-Adolf von, German Ambassador in Poland.
- MOŚCICKI, Ignacy, President of Poland.
- MORTA, Giuseppe, Swiss Federal Councillor; Head of the Political Department (Foreign Ministry) of the Federal Council.
- MUNCH, Peter, Danish Foreign Minister.
- MUNTERS, Vilhelms, Latvian Foreign Minister.
- MUSSOLINI, Benito, Founder of the Fascist Party; Head of the Italian Government; Supreme Commander of the Italian Armed Forces.
- NAGGIAR, Paul-Emile, French Ambassador in the Soviet Union.
- NEUHAUSEN, Franz, Consul General, special representative for Yugoslavia of the Four Year Plan.
- NUMAN. *See* MENEMENCIOĞLU.
- ORSENIGO, Cesare, Monsignor, Apostolic Nuncio in Germany.
- OSHIMA, Hiroshi, Japanese Ambassador in Germany.
- OTT, Eugen, German Ambassador in Japan.
- PANNWITZ, Eberhard von, German Minister in Albania.
- PAPEN, Franz von, German Ambassador in Turkey from April 1939.
- PARIANI, Alberto, General, Italian Under Secretary of State for War; Chief of the General Staff of the Army.
- PAUL, Prince, Regent of Yugoslavia.
- PILSUDSKI, Józef, Marshal, Polish Minister of War 1926-1935.
- PIUS XII, Pope, elected March 2, 1939.
- POTEMKIN, Vladimir, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union.
- RAEDER, Erich, Grand Admiral, Commander-in-Chief of the German Navy.
- REINEBECK, Otto, German Minister in Guatemala.
- RENTHE-FINK, Cecil von, German Minister in Denmark.
- RIBBENTROP, Joachim von, Reich Foreign Minister.
- RICBERT, Arvid, Swedish Minister in Germany.
- RICHTHOFEN, Herbert Freiherr von, German Minister in Bulgaria from May 1939.
- RENTLEIN, Emil von, Head of Political Division II (Western Europe) in the German Foreign Ministry.
- RITTER, Karl, Ambassador for special duties in the German Foreign Ministry.
- ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano, President of the United States.
- ROSSO, Augusto, Italian Ambassador in the Soviet Union.
- RÜMELIN, Eugen, German Minister in Bulgaria until April 1939.
- SANDLER, Rickard, Swedish Foreign Minister.
- SARACOĞLU, Şükrü, Turkish Foreign Minister.
- SCHIEL, Arne, Norwegian Minister in Germany.
- SCHLIEF, Martin, Head of Political Division V (Eastern Europe) in the German Foreign Ministry.
- SCHMIDT, Paul Karl, Acting Director, subsequently Director, of the Information and Press Department of the German Foreign Ministry from April 1939; also press officer to the Reich Foreign Minister and member of his Personal Staff.
- SCHMIDT, Paul Otto, as interpreter in the German Foreign Ministry from 1923, was present at many of the meetings between German leaders and foreign statesmen; member of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat.
- SCHNEEWIND, Otto, Rear-Admiral, Chief of Staff of the Naval War Staff and Head of the Naval Command Office.

- SCHNURRE, Julius, Head of Economic Policy Division IV (Eastern Europe) in the German Foreign Ministry.
- SCHOEN, Wilhelm Freiherr von, German Ambassador in Chile.
- SCHULENBURG, Friedrich Werner Count von der, German Ambassador in the Soviet Union.
- SEEDS, Sir William, British Ambassador in the Soviet Union.
- SELTZER, Karl, Estonian Foreign Minister.
- SERRANO SUÑER, Ramón, Spanish Minister of the Interior and Propaganda.
- SHIRATORI, Toshio, Japanese Ambassador in Italy.
- SIMON, Sir John, British Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- STALIN, Josif, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and member of the Politburo.
- STIEVE, Friedrich, Director of the Cultural Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry until June 1939.
- STOHRER, Eberhard von, German Ambassador in Spain.
- STRANG, William, Head of the Central Department of the British Foreign Office.
- STUCKI, Walter, Swiss Minister in France.
- SUÑER. *See* SERRANO.
- SZTÓJAY, Döme, Hungarian Minister in Germany.
- TELEKI, Pál Count, Hungarian Minister President.
- THERMANN, Edmund Freiherr von, German Ambassador in the Argentine Republic.
- THOMSEN, Hans, Counsellor of the German Embassy in the United States; Chargé d'Affaires during the absence of Ambassador Dieckhoff.
- TILEA, Viorel, Rumanian Minister in Great Britain.
- TIPPELSKIRCH, Werner von, Counsellor of the German Embassy in the Soviet Union.
- TISO, Jozef, Minister President of Slovakia March–October 1939.
- TOFER, Karl, Estonian Minister in Germany.
- TUKA, Vojtech, Slovak Deputy Minister President March–October 1939; also Minister of the Interior April–October 1939.
- TWARDOWSKI, Fritz von, Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry until June 1939, then Director.
- URBŠYS, Juozas, Lithuanian Foreign Minister.
- USAMI, Uzuhiiko, Counsellor of the Japanese Embassy in Germany.
- WEIZSÄCKER, Ernst Freiherr von, State Secretary of the German Foreign Ministry.
- WELCZECK, Johannes Count von, German Ambassador in France.
- WELLES, Sumner, United States Under Secretary of State.
- WIEDEMANN, Fritz, Captain, German Consul General at San Francisco.
- WIEHL, Emil, Director of the Economic Policy Department in the German Foreign Ministry.
- WILSON, Sir Horace, Permanent Secretary of the British Treasury and official Head of the Civil Service.
- WOERMANN, Ernst, Director of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry with the personal title of Under State Secretary.
- WOHLTHAT, Helmuth, Ministerialdirektor on special assignment in the Office of the Commissioner for the Four Year Plan.
- WUORIMAA, Aarne, Finnish Minister in Germany.
- YONAI, Mitsumasa, Admiral, Japanese Minister of Marine.
- ZAHLE, Herluf, Danish Minister in Germany.
- ZECH, Julius Count, German Minister in the Netherlands.
- ZECHLIN, Erich, German Minister in Lithuania.
- ZOG, King of Albania.

## Appendix V

### GLOSSARY OF GERMAN TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- AA, Auswärtiges Amt**, Foreign Ministry
- Abt. Abw., Abteilung Abwehr**, the Intelligence Department of the OKW (*q.v.*)
- AGK, Ausführungsgemeinschaft für Kriegsgeschütz**, Export Cartel for War Material
- Altbundesrat**, see **Bundesrat**
- Amisrat**, grade in the Civil Service, see under **gehobener Dienst**
- Ang., Angabe**, when action of more than one sort is to be taken on a paper the relevant instructions are usually split up as Ang. I, II, etc., this follows the file number
- Anschluss**, annexation, union; especially the annexation of Austria by Germany
- AO, Auslandsorganisation**, Foreign Organization of the NSDAP concerned with German nationals living abroad
- AOK, Armeeoberkommando**, Army Headquarters; the particular Army [*Armee, q.v.*] is denoted by an Arabic numeral, e.g. AOK 14
- APA, Aussenpolitisches Amt**, Foreign Affairs Office of the NSDAP
- Armee**, Army, i.e. *an* Army as distinct from the Army [*Heer, q.v.*]
- Att. Gr., Attaché Gruppe**, Attaché Group
- Aufklärungsausschuss Hamburg Bremen**, semi-official body drawing a secret subsidy from the Information and Press Department of the Foreign Ministry; its main function was to place articles giving the German point of view in the foreign press, chiefly in Latin America, in such a way that their German origin was not apparent; it also produced a series of reports on developments in public opinion abroad contributed by its resident representatives or other contacts
- Ausl., Ausland**, abroad; has the meaning "foreign" when prefixed to another noun, cf. **Auslandsorganisation**
- Auslandsdeutsche**, German nationals or persons of German origin residing abroad
- BRAM, Büro RAM**, Secretariat of the Reich Foreign Minister
- Bundesrat**, official designation of the Head of a Department (Federal Minister) of the Swiss Confederation who, on termination of his office, is given the designation of **Altbundesrat**
- Chef**, Chief, Head
- Chefsache**, top secret military
- Dg. Pol., Dirigent der Politischen Abteilung**, Deputy Director of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry
- Dienststelle Ribbentrop**, office of Ribbentrop in his capacity of foreign affairs adviser to Hitler; of decreasing importance after his appointment as Foreign Minister
- Diplomatische Korrespondenz, Deutsche Diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz**, the official organ of the German Foreign Ministry
- DNB, Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro**, German News Agency, owned by the Ministry of Propaganda
- e.o., ex officio**; where this precedes the file number, it indicates a draft for which there are no preceding papers (see **zu**)
- Freiherr**, hereditary title of nobility
- Freikorps**, Free Corps, irregular volunteer military formation
- Führer**, Leader (i.e., Hitler)
- Gau, Gauleiter**, see **Hoheitsgebiet** and **Hoheitssträger**
- g., geh., geheim**, secret
- Geheimrat** (lit. Privy Councillor) an honorary title
- gehobener Dienst**, the "Upper Service" in the German Civil Service which comes between the *mittlerer Dienst* (*q.v.*) and the *höherer Dienst* (*q.v.*). This corresponds roughly to the

- Higher Clerical and Executive Classes in the British Civil Service. It contains the following four grades: (1) Inspektor, e.g. Technischer Inspektor, Bibliothekinspektor, Regierungsinspektor, Verwaltungsinspektor, Konsulatssekretär (AA); (2) Oberinspektor, e.g. Regierungsoberinspektor, Verwaltungsoberinspektor, Regierungsoberrevisor, Konsulatssekretär I Kl. (AA); (3) Amtmann, e.g. Regierungsamtmann, Verwaltungsamtmann, Kanzler (AA), Ministerialkanzleivorsteher; (4) Amtsrat (Hofrat until 1918)
- Gen. St. d. H., Generalstab des Heeres,** General Staff of the Army
- g. Kdos., geheime Kommandosache,** top secret military
- g. Rs., geheime Reichssache,** top secret
- Hauptreferent,** head of a department in the Dienststelle Ribbentrop (q.v.)
- Heer,** Army, i.e., the Army as distinct from an Army [Armee, q.v.]
- Hoheitsgebiet,** the territorial province of a Hoheitsträger (q.v.)
- Hoheitsträger,** the highest-ranking representative of the National Socialist Party, the most important representatives of which, according to rank and province, were as follows:  
Führer—Reich  
Gauleiter—Gau  
Kreisleiter—Kreis  
Ortsgruppenleiter—Ortsgruppe
- höherer Dienst,** the "Higher Service" in the German Civil Service which corresponds to the Administrative Class in the British Civil Service, though the functions of certain lower grades may be more executive than administrative. It contains the following six grades: (1) Regierungsrat, Bibliothekar, Gesandtschaftsrat (AA), Konsul (AA), Legationsrat (AA), Vizekonsul (AA); (2) Oberregierungsrat, Oberregierungsrat als Ministerialbürodirektor, Gesandtschaftsrat I Kl. (AA), Konsul I Kl. (AA), Legationsrat, I Kl. (AA); (3) Ministerialrat, Botschaftsrat (AA), Generalkonsul (AA), Gesandter (AA), Vortragender Legationsrat (AA); (4) Ministerialdirigent, General-
- konsul I Kl. (AA), Gesandter I Kl. (AA); (5) Ministerialdirektor, Gesandter I Kl. as Head of a Mission (AA); (6) Staatssekretär, Botschafter (AA)
- h.vb., hiermit verbunden,** used of two documents with different registry numbers, as a directive to the registry to keep them together
- Kreis, Kreisleiter,** see **Hoheitsgebiet** and **Hoheitsträger**
- K., Kult., Kulturpolitische Abteilung,** Cultural Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry (see Appendix II)
- Kult. Spez.,** see **Pol. Spez.**
- L., Abteilung Landesverteidigung,** National Defence Office of the OKW (q.v.)
- Landbank,** provincial bank
- Landesgruppe,** an organization of the National Socialist Party which was subordinate to the Landesgruppenleiter, as the Hoheitsträger (q.v.) of the Auslandsorganisation (q.v.), within the territory of a foreign State
- Landesgruppenleiter,** see **Landesgruppe**
- Landrat,** head of a rural administrative district (Landkreis)
- Luftwaffe,** German Air Force
- M., Militärfragen,** military questions; documents dealt with by the section of Political Division I dealing with military questions bear the file number **Pol. I M.** (see Appendix II)
- Marinekommandoamt,** Naval Command Office, this consisted of five divisions, two of which, viz. Operations (1 Skl.) and Naval Intelligence (3 Skl.), made up the Naval War Staff in time of war
- M.D., Min. Dir., Ministerialdirektor,** grade in the Civil Service, usually the director of a department in a Ministry; see under **höherer Dienst**
- Ministerialdirigent,** grade in the Civil Service, usually the deputy director of a department in a Ministry; see under **höherer Dienst**
- mittlerer Dienst,** the "Intermediate Service" of the German Civil Service, which corresponds to the Clerical Class in the British Civil Service. It contains the following three grades:

- (1) Assistent, e.g. Regierungsassistent, Verwaltungsassistent; (2) Sekretär, e.g. Regierungsssekretär, Verwaltungsssekretär, Kanzleivorsteher, Ministerialkanzleisekretär; (3) Obersekretär, e.g. Regierungsobersekretär, Verwaltungsobersekretär, Ministerialkanzleiobersekretär
- NSDAP, Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei**, National Socialist German Workers' Party, the full title of the Nazi Party
- NSKK, Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahr-Korps**, National Socialist Motor Transport Corps
- Ob. d. H., Oberbefehlshaber des Heeres**, Commander-in-Chief of the Army
- Ob. d. M., Oberbefehlshaber der Kriegsmarine**, Commander-in-Chief of the Navy
- Oberführer**, SA and SS rank approximately equivalent to Colonel
- Obergruppenführer**, SA and SS rank approximately equivalent to lieutenant-general
- Oberregierungsrat**, grade in the Home Civil Service equivalent to Counsellor in the Foreign Service; see under *höherer Dienst*
- OKH, Oberkommando des Heeres**, High Command of the Army
- OKM, Oberkommando der Kriegsmarine**, High Command of the Navy
- OKW, Oberkommando der Wehrmacht**, High Command of the Wehrmacht (*q.v.*)
- Ortsgruppe, Ortsgruppenleiter**, see *Heheitsgebiet* and *Hoheitssträger*
- Pol. Spez.**, this file reference indicates the section of the Political Department of the Foreign Ministry to which Missions, in accordance with instructions of May 3, 1939 (not printed, 904/283670-71), were to report for propaganda purposes on political blunders and failures by the democracies. The designation was changed to Kult. Spez. when its functions were transferred to the Cultural Policy Department on June 1, 1939
- Pol., Politische Abteilung**, Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry; sub-divided according to geographical areas, each designated by a Roman numeral, e.g. Pol. IV (see Appendix II)
- Promi, (Reichs-) Propagandaministerium**, Reich Ministry of Propaganda
- R., Recht, Rechtsabteilung**, Legal Department of the German Foreign Ministry (see Appendix II)
- RAM, Reichsaussenminister**, Reich Foreign Minister
- Ref., Referat (*q.v.*); Referent (*q.v.*)**
- Referat**, division within a department of a German Ministry
- Referent**, head of a Referat (*q.v.*); drafting officer
- R. d. L. u. Ob. d. L., Reichsminister der Luftfahrt und Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe**, Reich Minister of Air and Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe (i.e., Göring)
- Regierungsrat**, grade in the Civil Service, see under *höherer Dienst*
- Reich, Germany (i.e., the Third Reich, Hitler's Germany)**
- Reichsbank**, German National Bank
- Reichsdeutsche**, Reich Germans, i.e., those Germans who were Reich citizens, often contrasted with *Volksdeutsche* (*q.v.*)
- Reichsführer-SS**, Commander-in-Chief of the SS (i.e. Himmler)
- Reichsgesetzblatt**, "Reich Law Gazette", official publication of the Reich Ministry of the Interior giving the text of new laws, decrees and regulations
- Reichsgruppe Industrie**, Reich Federation of Industry
- RK, Reichskanzlei**, Reich Chancellery, office of the German Chancellor
- Reichsleiter**, highest NSDAP rank, signifying membership of the Supreme Party Directorate (*Reichsleitung*)
- Reichsstatthalter**, Reich Governor, representative of the Reich Government in one of the Federal States of Germany (Land) or administrative areas (Reichsgau) in the annexed territory, controlling its entire administration
- RLM, Reichsluftfahrtministerium**, Reich Ministry of Air
- RM, Reichsmark**, the unit of German currency



- RM, Reichsminister**, any member of the Reich Cabinet, but in Foreign Ministry documents usually refers to the Reich Foreign Minister
- SA, Sturmabteilungen der NSDAP**, Storm Troops of the NSDAP (brown-shirts)
- SD, Sicherheitsdienst**, security service; intelligence and counter-intelligence agency of the SS (*q.v.*)
- Skl., Seekriegsleitung**, Naval War Staff; (see *Marinekommandoamt*)
- SS, Schutzstaffeln der NSDAP**, used for military and police purposes
- Staatsrat**, State Councillor
- St.S., Staatssekretär**, State Secretary, the highest career official in a Reich Ministry
- U.St.S., Unterstaatssekretär**, Under State Secretary
- v., von**, of
- Vbd., Völkerbund**, League of Nations; documents dealt with by the section of Political Division I concerned with the League of Nations bear the file number Pol. I Vbd. (see Appendix II)
- VB, Völkischer Beobachter**, the principal daily newspaper of the NSDAP
- VDA, Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland**, League for Germanism Abroad, a pre-1939 pan-German organization which became allied with the NSDAP and was used by the Auslandsorganisation (*q.v.*) to unite Germans everywhere
- V.L.R., Vortragender Legationsrat**, Senior Counsellor, grade in the Foreign Ministry; see under *höherer Dienst*
- Volksdeutsche**, ethnic Germans, i.e., persons of German stock but not of Reich nationality and living outside the frontiers of the Reich (see *Reichsdeutsche*)
- Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (Vomi)**, a Department of the SS whose duty was the care of German minorities abroad and the resettlement in Germany of Auslandsdeutsche (*q.v.*) and Volksdeutsche (*q.v.*)
- WFA, Wehrmachtführungsamt**, Operations Office of the High Command of the Wehrmacht (*q.v.*)
- W.Stb., Wehrwirtschaftsstab**, War Economy Staff
- W, Wirtschaftspolitische Abteilung**, Economic Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry (see Appendix II)
- Wehrmacht**, Armed Forces of the German Reich
- zu**, further to, in connection with; where this precedes the file number it indicates that the previous papers on the subject have this number